

June

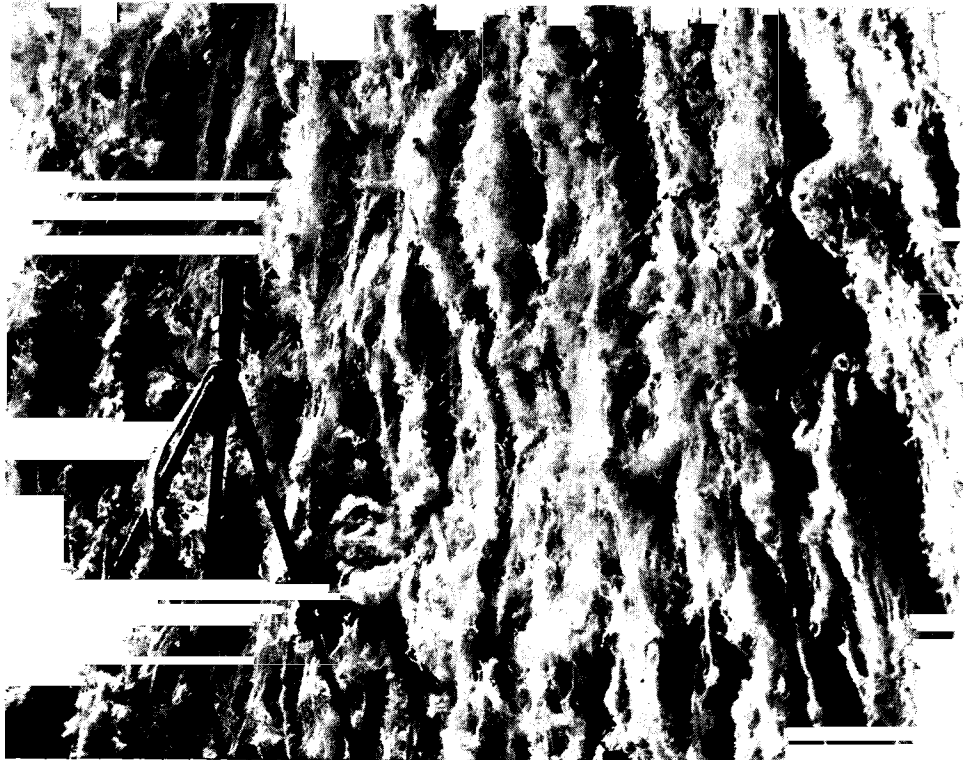
The American Mercury



John L. Lewis: His Labor Record . . . *Gordon Carroll*
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Captain Robert Belknap Goes West . . *Lincoln Colcord*
Old-Fashioned Social Security *Della T. Lutes*
The Battleship Comes Back *Fletcher Pratt*
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THE AMERICAN MERCURY

VOLUME
XLI

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Published by The American Mercury, Inc., monthly on the 25th of the month preceding the date, at 25 cents a copy. Annual subscription, \$3.00 in U. S. and Possessions, Canada, Mexico, Cuba, Spain and Colonies, and the Republics of Central and South America. Foreign subscriptions, \$4.00. Publication office, Concord, N. H. Editorial office, Ridgefield, Conn. General offices, 570 Lexington avenue, New York City. Printed in the United States. Copyright, 1937, by The American Mercury, Inc. Entered as

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★★★★★ indicate a book of exceptional and lasting merit. ★★★★★ a distinguished and valuable work. ★★★ a readable and engaging volume. ★★ a fair performance. ★ an unimportant book, but possessing some characteristic of value. The absence of stars may be taken to mean the absence of merit.

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Frigidity
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First Intercourse
Secondary Sexual Characters
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"Over-Sexed"
Exhibitionism
The Sexual Criminal
Analysis of Courtship
Sadism and Masochism
Woman's Change of Life
The Dangerous Age in Men

Cruelty and Pain in Relation
to Sex
Homosexuality
Hermaphroditism
Sexual Abstinence
Sex Intercourse and Health
The Choice of a Mate
Preparation for Marriage
Fertility and Sterility
Divorce
Monogamy; Polygamy
The Nature of Birth Control
The Question of Abortion
Frequency of Coitus
The Sexual Athlete; Satyriasis;
Nymphomania

Jealousy
Married Love
Psychoanalytic Concepts of Sex
Pre-marital Knowledge and
Experience
Modesty; Nudism
Childbirth; Sex Life during Preg-
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Sex Practice in Marriage
Methods and Technique of
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Sexual Pleasure and Conception
Positions in Coitus
Sex Life and Nervous Disorders

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Dreams; Their Significance
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(Continued from page vi)

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★ **BAYARD TAYLOR**, by Richmond Croom Beatty. \$3.00. *University of Oklahoma Press*. Interesting particulars about a nineteenth-century American author and traveler now nearly forgotten. The book is marred by an unbelievable quantity of footnotes and a style which would be more fitting to a Ph.D.'s thesis.

FREMONT OLDER, by Evelyn Wells. \$3.00. *Appleton-Century*. Hero-worshipping biography of California's fighting editor. Written in newspaperese.

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★ **THE EMERGENCE OF HUMAN CULTURE**, by Carl J. Warden. \$2.00. *Macmillan*. Scholarly, but rather obvious, examination of the history of culture. Clearly and simply written.

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★★★★★ **THE WEALTH OF NATIONS**, by Adam Smith. \$1.10. *Modern Library*. Max Lerner, in an unusually able introduction, remarks that this volume "has done as much perhaps as any modern book thus far to shape the whole landscape of life as we live it today." This is the Canner edition.

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★★★★ **RODEO**, by R. B. Cunningham Graham. \$2.50. *Doubleday, Doran*. Forty-seven stories and sketches by a master of English prose. A book that should be in every library.

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★★★ **THE LAST ROMANTIC**, by William Orton. \$2.50. *Farrar & Rinehart*. A curious book — in part stimulating, in part disappointing — by one of the keenest minds in America. A minor *Of Human Bondage*, the story is said to be an authentic one though written in novel form; real people, among them Katherine Mansfield, figure as characters.

★★★ **FORTY CENTURIES LOOK DOWN**, by F. Britten Austin. \$2.50. *Stokes*. A biographical novel of Napoleon's Egyptian campaign. Well worth reading by fiction lovers as well as Napoleonic students.

★★★ **THE ANTIGUA STAMP**, by Robert Graves. \$2.50. *Random House*. Mr. Graves displays considerable literary talent in writing the amusing story of a feud between brother and sister caused by a rare postage stamp.

★★★ **THE QUIET SHORE**, by Walter Havighurst. \$2.50. *Macmillan*. A pioneer settler of the Lake Erie country lives to see his children and grandchildren divided in interest as to the merits of farm *versus* industrial life. A real American problem competently fictionized.

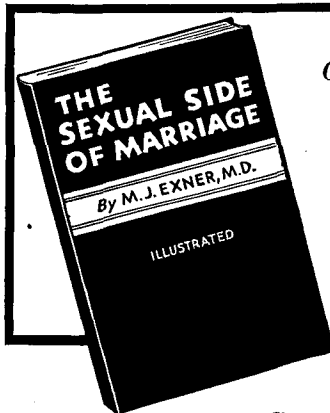
★★★ **THE KELLYS AND THE O'KELLYS**, by Anthony Trollope. \$.95. *Modern Library*. A reprint of Anthony Trollope's second novel, issued originally in

(Continued on page x)

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THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from page viii)

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★ **SONNETS AND SESTINAS**, by Wilmon Brewer. \$1.50. *Cornhill*. A scholarly and/but fascinating history of the origin, growth, and mutation of two forms, one of which is employed by practically every poet and the other shunned by all except a few determined technicians. Mr. Brewer's own poems are unimportant, but his prose analysis (which takes up two-thirds of the space) is valuable.

★ **AN APRIL SONG**, by Charles Hanson Towne. \$1.50. *Farrar & Rinehart*. Pretty songs about lilacs, youth's long-gone delight, the miracle of Spring, "the Lark's pure song which vanquished wrong", and (believe it or not) jocund April playing on his pipes while daffodil and crocus leap. Scarcely what one would expect of a mature and not altogether naïve Man-About-Manhattan-Towne.

★ **MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE VERSE**, Edited by Ada F. Snell. \$1.75. *Oxford Press*. Although written by undergraduates, this is every whit as mature as Mr. Towne's reflections, and equally adept. It is, however, not in the same class with the more advanced *Trial Balances*, a collection of undergraduate poetry published about a year ago.

PHANTOM THOUGHTS and CERTAIN PATHS, by Doris Caesar. \$1.50 each. *Putnam's*. Miss Caesar's publisher presents two of her volumes simultaneously, possibly on the theory that two books of bad poetry are more impressive than one collection of merely mediocre verse.

RHYME AND PUNISHMENT, by Leonard Bacon. \$2.00. *Farrar & Rinehart*. Diffuse, fumbling, and embarrassing in its conscientious failure; heavy light verse attempting to pass as satire.

(Continued on page 110)

WHAT AMERICA MUST KNOW
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by Arthur C. Palm

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THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from page xi)

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The American MERCURY

A CONSTITUTION FOR THE NEW DEAL

By H. L. MENCKEN

*At this solemnly critical moment in the Nation's history,
THE MERCURY is privileged to present Dr. Roosevelt
with a plainly-written version of his own Constitution.*

AS EVERYONE knows, the principal cause of the uproar now going on at Washington is a conflict between the swift-moving idealism of the New Deal and the unyielding hunkerousness of the Constitution proclaimed in March, 1788. That Constitution has been amended from time to time, but the process of amendment is slow and clumsy, and so the instrument lags far behind the bold fancies of forward-looking men.

Various Presidents, including the present gifted incumbent, have sought to get round the impediment it presents to their projects by packing the Supreme Court with judges willing to enlarge the

Constitution by interpretation; but that device is also faulty, for, judges being what they are, it is hard to find a sufficient number who are really trustworthy. A given judge, though he may be ready and even eager to do one dirty job today, may develop conscientious scruples about doing another and quite different dirty job tomorrow. Thus the progress of mankind is hindered, and Utopia continues to be only a vague and disquieting dream.

What is needed, obviously, is a wholly new Constitution, drawn up with enough boldness and imagination to cover the whole program of the More Abundant

Life, now and hereafter. It must reject altogether the outworn superstitions which corrupt the present instrument. It must be grounded, not on the hallucinations of political theorists immersed in their damp cloisters, but on the needs and desires of practical men, already in office and eager to exercise their powers for the salvation of humanity. In brief, it must be an *inductive* Constitution, proceeding from the *fait accompli* to its dialectical explanation and justification. All the Constitutions of the past have run the other way, but there is no reason why the old practice should be tolerated in a time of change. What the New Deal needs, and has never had, is room to work its magic unimpeded by the dead hand — an opportunity to function without restraint according to patterns of its own.

That is all I presume to offer here. The Constitution that follows is not my invention, and in more than one detail I have unhappy doubts of its wisdom. But I believe that it sets forth with reasonable accuracy the plan of government that the shining young wizards of the More Abundant Life have sought so bravely to substitute for the plan of the Fathers. In part, as the reader will note, they have succeeded — in

spite of the obstacles presented by the Constitution of 1788. But in part they are still hampered and thwarted by that Constitution, and all I propose here is to deliver them, that they may work their sorceries in full freedom, to the glory of God. They have themselves argued at one time or another, either by word of mouth or by act, for everything I here give them. Cast into the austere jargon of constitutional law, some of their proposals may appear strange and even more or less unrecognizable, but I don't think I have made any actual departures from the record.

In pioneer work of this kind it is difficult if not impossible to avoid omissions. Thus there are probably some gaping holes in my first draft. If any kind readers, whether legal or lay, who detect such defects will notify them to me, I shall be glad to embody rectifications in a later text. It may be — and in fact it is very probable — that that perfected text will never be formally adopted, but nevertheless its preparation may help to a better understanding of the New Deal, and may even serve to clarify the thinking of some of the New Dealers. Suggestions for this new Constitution's improvement may be sent to me in care of the Editor of THE MERCURY.

PREAMBLE

We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish social justice, draw the fangs of privilege, effect the redistribution of property, remove the burden of liberty from ourselves and our posterity, and insure the continuance of the New Deal and the More Abundant Life, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

ARTICLE I

The Executive

SECTION ONE. All governmental power of whatever sort shall be vested in a President of the United States. He shall hold his office during a series of terms of four years each, and shall be chosen by the direct vote of all persons above the age of twenty-one years, including lunatics and paupers.

SECTION TWO. No one shall be eligible hereafter to the office of President who has, during any calendar year of his life, derived more than one-third of his income from the practice of any trade, craft, business, art, profession or mystery requiring skill or labor, or whose total income from such practice in any year has exceeded five thousand dollars.

SECTION THREE. The President, during the period for which he was elected, shall not make any speeches for hire, or contribute any paid articles to newspapers or

magazines, or receive any payment for signed advertising testimonials, or appear on the public stage, or as a professional performer on the radio or in the movies. But this prohibition shall not extend to any member or members of his family.

SECTION FOUR. Before he enters on the execution of his office the President shall take the following oath or affirmation: "I do solemnly swear that I will (insofar as I deem it feasible and convenient), faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will (to the best of my recollection and in the light of experiment and second thought), carry out the pledges made by me to the electors during my campaign for election (or such of them as I may select)."

SECTION FIVE. The President shall be commander-in-chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the militia, Boy

Scouts, CIO, People's Front, and other armed forces of the nation. He shall have the free use of its naval craft at all times, whether for recreation or sport.

SECTION SIX. The President shall have the power:

(1). To lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, and to expend all the income of the United States, from whatever source derived, in such manner as he may deem to be to their or his advantage and benefit;

(2). To borrow money on the credit of the United States, and to provide for its repayment or non-repayment on such terms as he may fix, and in whatever currency;

(3). To regulate all commerce with foreign nations, and among the several States, and within them; to license all persons now engaged or proposing to engage in business; to examine into and regulate their several affairs; to limit their profits by proclamation from time to time; and to fix wages, prices, and hours of work;

(4). To coin money, regulate the content and value thereof, and to amend or repudiate any contract requiring the payment by the United States, or by any private person, of coin of any given fineness;

(5). To make treaties and alliances, declare war, prescribe the

term of neutrality in the event of war between other nations, grant letters of marque and reprisal, raise and command armies, and conscript soldiers;

(6). To repeal or amend, in his discretion, any so-called natural law, including Gresham's law, the law of diminishing returns, and the law of gravitation.

SECTION SEVEN. The President shall be assisted in the performance of his duties by a Cabinet of eight or more persons, of whom at least one shall be a female Uplifter of mature years. Each member of the Cabinet shall be the head of an executive department. The duties of each shall be to make speeches whenever so instructed and to expend the public funds under the direction of the President in such manner as to guarantee his continuance in office.

SECTION EIGHT. The President may, in his discretion, establish such bureaus, boards, commissions, and other executive agencies as he deems necessary, and clothe them with such powers as he sees fit, including the power to examine into the books and papers of any corporation or natural person, the power to make and enforce laws, and the power to pledge the credit of the United States. No person shall be a member of any such

agency who has had any practical experience of the matters he is appointed to deal with.

SECTION NINE. There shall be a Comptroller-General of the United States, appointed by the President for a term of nine years. It shall be his duty to scrutinize all expenditures proposed by any of the executive departments or other agencies, and to approve those authorized by the President.

SECTION TEN. One of the members of the Cabinet shall be a Postmaster General. It shall be his duty to scrutinize the qualifications of all persons seeking appointment to office under the United States, to the end that the President may have competent and diligent aid at all elections.

SECTION ELEVEN. One of the members of the Cabinet shall be an Attorney General. It shall be his duty to provide legal opinions certifying to the constitutionality of all measures undertaken by the President, and, under the President's direction, to gather evidence of the senility of judges.

ARTICLE II

The Legislature

SECTION ONE. The legislature of the United States shall consist of a

Senate and House of Representatives. The Senate shall be composed of two members from each State, chosen by the voters thereof for six years. The House of Representatives shall be composed of as many members from each State, chosen by the voters for two years, as there are multiples therein of 300,000 inhabitants, including lunatics and paupers.

SECTION TWO. The Vice-President of the United States shall be the president of the Senate, and the agent therein of the President. He shall make known to the members the President's wishes from time to time, and shall entertain such views on public questions as the President may direct. The presiding officer of the House of Representatives shall be a Speaker elected from among its members with the advice and consent of the President, and his duties and responsibilities shall be those of the Vice-President in the Senate.

SECTION THREE. The Senate and House of Representatives shall appoint all their other officers, including doorkeepers, barbers, masseurs, sommeliers, chaplains, and janitors.

SECTION FOUR. All legislation shall be by bill. Every bill shall be prepared under the direction of the President, and transmitted to the

two Houses at his order by their presiding officers. No member shall propose any amendment to a bill without permission in writing from the President or one of his authorized agents. In the Senate any member may speak freely on any bill; but in the House no member shall speak without permission of the Speaker. In case any member shall doubt the wisdom of a bill he may apply to the President or to any authorized agent of the President for light upon it, and thereafter he shall be counted as voting aye. In all cases a majority of members shall be counted as voting aye.

SECTION FIVE. Both Houses may appoint committees of their members to conduct public hearings on bills before them; but no person appearing at such a hearing shall offer any argument involving criticism of the President, or of any of his agents.

SECTION SIX. Both Houses may appoint special committees of their members to investigate the business practices, political views, and private lives of any person or persons known to be inimical or contumacious to the President; and such committees shall publish at the public cost any evidence discovered that appears to them to be damaging to the property or repu-

tation of the person or persons investigated.

SECTION SEVEN. Each House, with the advice and consent of the President, shall determine the rules of its proceedings, punish its members for refusing to vote as directed by him, and expel a member for persisting in contumacy.

SECTION EIGHT. All agents of the President shall have access to the floors and cloakrooms of both Houses, and shall be heard and deferred to with the respect becoming their authority and dignity.

SECTION NINE. Members of the Senate and House of Representatives shall be agents of the President in the distribution of public offices, federal appropriations, and other gratuities in their several States, and shall be rewarded with such patronage in ratio to their fidelity to his ideals and commands.

ARTICLE III

The Judiciary

SECTION ONE. The judicial power of the United States shall be vested, subject to the authority of the President, in one Supreme Court, and in such inferior courts as may be established by law. The judges of the Supreme Court and of all

inferior courts shall be appointed by the President, and shall hold their offices until he determines by proclamation that they have become senile. The number of judges appointed to the Supreme Court shall be prescribed by the President, and may be changed at his discretion, and he shall fix their qualifications from time to time.

SECTION TWO. The jurisdiction and powers of the Supreme Court and of all inferior courts shall be determined by the President, and before deciding any cause affected with a public interest they shall seek his counsel or that of his appointed agents. No act or portion of any act that he has approved shall be declared unconstitutional by any court. In case the judges of any appellate court are uncertain of his desires, they shall have the right to petition him, in a respectful manner, for instructions.

SECTION THREE. All decisions of the Supreme Court shall be unanimous.

ARTICLE IV

Bill of Rights

SECTION ONE. There shall be complete freedom of speech and of the press — subject to such regulations as the President may

from time to time promulgate.

SECTION TWO. The freedom of communication by radio shall not be abridged; but the President and such persons as he may designate shall have the first call on the time of all stations within the jurisdiction of the United States.

SECTION THREE. To the end that the equal protection of the laws may be preserved inviolate, every law for the arbitration of disputes between Capital and Labor shall provide that all the arbitrators be representatives of Labor.

SECTION FOUR. The right of the people to enjoy and be secure in their debts shall not be violated, and no law shall be passed providing judicial process for the recovery of borrowed money.

SECTION FIVE. Every person whose annual income falls below a minimum to be fixed from time to time by proclamation of the President shall receive from the public funds an amount sufficient to bring it above that minimum.

SECTION SIX. Every person who is dissatisfied with the house he lives in shall be provided with another and better house at the public expense, and no such person shall be evicted from any such better house for the non-payment of rent.

SECTION SEVEN. No Labor union

shall be incorporated and no officer or member thereof shall be accountable in any court for any loss of life or damage to person or property during a strike.

SECTION EIGHT. No person shall be held liable in any court for the cost of delivering, feeding, medicating, educating, clothing, or housing his own children, but all such costs shall be met out of the public funds.

SECTION NINE. The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be invaded except by committees of the two Houses of Congress and persons appointed by the President, or by his agents.

SECTION TEN. The enumeration in this Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the executive. All powers not herein delegated to the President

are reserved to him and to his agents.

ARTICLE V

Amendments

SECTION ONE. The President, whenever he shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this Constitution. Every such amendment shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution, when it is so proclaimed by the President, or by any person acting as his agent and with his consent. To the end that the President may be afforded sufficient time to acquaint the people with the purposes of any proposed amendment, and that they may take counsel together on its wisdom, no amendment shall be proclaimed until a period of at least six days has passed since it was proposed.



Editor's Note: Undoubtedly this Constitution, carefully prepared as it has been, will need amendment almost as soon as it is published. Constitutions invariably do. The Editor of THE MERCURY seconds Mr. Mencken's invitation to readers to send in suggestions. We will print any submitted amendment which is as intelligent as the average amendment offered annually from the floor of the United States Senate. This standard should give contributors a considerable latitude.

JOHN L. LEWIS: HIS LABOR RECORD

BY GORDON CARROLL

Is Lewis just another Labor leader, or is he the man of the hour? The answer to this question undoubtedly points the pathway to the economic future of America.

THE present trend toward a collectivist regime in these United States is largely motivated by a united-front army of gullible workers captained by opportunists with a will-to-power philosophy of ruthless class-warfare. The supreme example of such leadership is John Llewellyn Lewis, and the spearhead of his militant opportunism is the Committee for Industrial Organization. Not since the days of Aaron Burr has the vaulting ambition of a single individual become a more crucial national issue, nor threatened more seriously to affect the welfare of every wage-earner in the Republic. Unless betrayed by the same laws of human fatality which eliminated the two great stalking-horses of the first New Deal Administration—Senator Huey P. Long and Governor Floyd B. Olson—the year 1940 may find Lewis wielding the balance of America's political power.

And yet there is this strange paradox about the man: three years ago he was a minority trade-union leader, hardly known by name to the millions of workers upon whose shoulders he now rides toward the threshold of victory.

It is impossible to dismiss Lewis as a meteoric figure of turbulent times, or as merely another indication of the level to which machine politics has sunk in this vanishing democracy. The man fits neither of these convenient pigeonholes. No amount of angry talk, or idle speculation, or partisan propaganda will remove his beetle-browed face from the American scene; for if Lewis could be exorcised by words, already he would be passing into the pages of contemporary history. Hence, those who would confront honestly the social realities of today must also confront one unpleasant truth: Lewis and his methods have come

to stay in American politics. The masses throughout the world, bewildered, unfit, yet hungry for power, are invading the domains of sovereignty: and in the United States, John L. Lewis is their special representative.

Oddly enough, few people to date have attempted to analyze Lewis from a factual point of view: most of his portraits have been drawn either from hearsay or folklore. The general public is totally ignorant of his record and his ambitions. Yet he is the man to whom senators and representatives make obeisance, and whose name is feared within the White House. Somehow, somewhere, there would seem to be an explanation of his surge to power. Is he an adventurer? A self-made statesman? A pawnbroker in political pledges? Perhaps he is all these. But essentially, the story of John L. is the story of *Might Makes Right*: in a national Administration of mooning "Liberals" and party hacks, Lewis has become supremely strong because his opponents have been vacillators. Ruthless, sanguine, even brutal when it suits his ends, he is a colossus in an era of gaudy humanitarianism. Gifted with an extraordinarily acute time-sense, he was the first captain of Labor to comprehend that the Republic was

ripe for a *Führer*. And so, in his native American manner, he has enacted here, in the field of industrial organization, the same startling ascent to prominence that has marked the careers of Europe's three masters of power-politics — Messrs. Stalin, Hitler, and Mussolini. If he differs from any of these, it is perhaps in superficiality only. For beneath the surface — behind the suave cloak of opportunism — Lewis is a Man of Action, pledging himself to bring Utopia to the working masses if they will only bend their brawn to his brain. And in the background of this promissory picture, growing in clarity each day, is the smiling profile of the Roosevelt Administration.

Consider a recent incident in Washington on the eve of the Gridiron Club dinner for the President. Lewis, unknown even to most newspapermen a few years ago, was a guest at a gathering which included Cabinet members, senators, and prominent figures in national life. Informality marked this purely masculine affair; the guests stood about chatting in an anteroom before dinner. Yet Lewis, by sheer weight of personality, dominated the whole group. His manner was easy and inoffensive; he made no uncouth gesture of self-esteem; he was the epitome of dig-

nity. That is, he was simply himself. But it was sufficient to make him the outstanding figure in a group of outstanding men. Everyone, including Cabinet members and senators, came up to Lewis. Lewis approached no one. Strangely enough, he did not have to—and he knew it. Later that evening, at the banquet speakers' table, the President's son, James Roosevelt, sat on Lewis' right hand, and on his left was Governor Earle of Pennsylvania, a 1940 presidential hope of many Left-wing New Dealers. Perhaps it was coincidence that Lewis was thus placed in the seating arrangements. And then, perhaps, it was not. At any rate, the incident was highly suggestive—suggestive of why Labor's newest leader has forged on to high places.

This picture of Lewis as a national figure now lacks but one stroke of the brush. Yet strange to remark, it is a sweeping stroke, reaching from crown to heel, without which the portrait is a weak likeness of the man. For the most significant fact in Lewis' march to power—the fact which has been conveniently overlooked by the American press—is that his autocratic aides and proletarian organizers in the CIO are almost all Communists and Left-wing Socialists. No similar situation has

ever before existed in the history of American trade-unionism.

The explanation for this affinity of men and motivations is not hard to find. When Lewis, in 1935, made his irretrievable decision to break with William Green and the conservative American Federation of Labor, he was not in the position of remaining a defenseless warrior in enemy territory. He had pondered the move in advance; he knew precisely what would be his next step. He at once turned for militant assistance to the Communists—the only mass-manipulating group in America that possessed the organization and technique for class-warfare and social revolution. No one, not even Lewis' most vociferous enemies, can criticize his perspicacity in taking this step. According to his lights, it was the logical thing to do. But by going over to the camp of the Communist Party, he not only burned his bridges behind him, but opened a new vista in the panorama of Labor relations, the far end of which is still concealed by the barricades of class-war strife.

The Communist Party offered Lewis a compact political organization, a staff of professional provocateurs, and an articulate army of class-conscious followers. Moreover, the gamut of pink to red is

a fashionable rainbow these days. And Lewis is certainly fashionable. He is not only the first American Labor leader to hire a Communist staff, but also the first to look at ease in evening dress and with a liveried chauffeur. Indeed, he may even be the first to enjoy emoluments comparable to those received by the Capitalist Bosses of Wall Street.

Let us take a careful look at the historic facts of his Labor record.

II

Today, John L. likes to talk passionately of his love for democracy. Throughout his public and private utterances runs the theme of liberty, equality, and fraternity, with aside remarks emphasizing the tyranny of Capitalism and Fascism. The CIO, orates Lewis, offers a democratic haven to the American worker; he paints an entrancing picture of the future, when every proletarian will live in harmony with his brother — and earn \$3000 a year to boot. But unhappily, Lewis' pledges do not square with his record. In his home lodge, the United Mine Workers of America, there are broken men who tell a tragic narrative of the dictatorial quality of John L.'s "democracy".

Consider, for example, the Lewis

technique in parliamentary affairs. When a convention of the UMW assembles, he first appoints all the committees, including that on credentials. Through his committee on resolutions, he controls the agenda of the convention. By various devices, he sways the voting power of the docile delegations. Anti-Lewis delegates who, despite all such precautions, finally reach the floor, find themselves powerless. The authoritarian shadow of Lewis pervades every corner of the convention hall; he controls proceedings with the threatening fist of a slugger.

Not that Lewis has openly sacked democracy: biennial conventions of the UMW are still regularly held, and the referendum is reverently invoked every two years for the election of international officers. But actually, the rank and file, when not Lewis dupes, have found themselves either gagged or bounced from the union. Just as Herr Hitler made himself a constitutional dictator in Germany by the simple device of "decree" government, so Lewis has muzzled opposition by the constitutional device of "reorganizing" districts. In the UMW, administrative power is diffused through thirty regional districts, each of which ostensibly elects its own officers and exercises

autonomous authority. To suppress such autonomy, Lewis simply moves into a district which has chosen anti-administration officers and, under a pretext, re-staffs it with provisional officers. Districts thus "reorganized" remain under the Lewis heel, without privilege of elections, until the international board—*i.e.*, Lewis—sees fit to restore rule.

At the last UMW convention in Washington in January, 1936, this issue of autonomy was furiously contested. A large percentage of the districts, it was revealed, were still under provisional Lewis officers. But in answer to resolutions demanding the restoration of democracy, presented by 221 local unions, the Lewis appointees made the quaintly Fascist rejoinder that "the International Executive Board is apprehensive lest the granting of so-called 'autonomous' rights to these provisional districts may result in the creation of internal political turmoil". When the vote was taken, the convention steamroller disposed of the issue.

In this connection, it is worthwhile to consider the historical writings of Comrade William Z. Foster, veteran chief of the Communist Party, and now a loyal Lewis supporter in the CIO. Comrade Foster should know his sub-

ject; his descriptions of UMW conventions are presented at face value. In a volume¹ published in 1927, before all criticism of Lewis had been expurgated from official Communist handbooks, he related bluntly:

Speakers were terrorized by professional gunmen. If in spite of such precautions a majority does vote against Lewis in a convention, he brazenly ignores it. At the 1924 convention he did this four times. Once the convention stormed for three hours in protest. But Lewis, holding the platform with his gunmen, waited until next day when the storm had blown over. Then he went ahead, his minority prevailing over the majority. At the same convention, Lewis, knowing that the delegates were overwhelmingly against him on the Howat expulsion question, with three-fourths of the delegates voting against him, he declared his proposal carried and immediately adjourned the convention. Wild excitement prevailed. Dozens demanded to speak, but Lewis' thugs kept them off the rostrum. The delegates, by actual count 1187 of a total of about 1700, immediately held a protest meeting. But Lewis sat tight.

But can't the thwarted delegates return to their tipples and vote Lewis out of the presidency at the succeeding election? No—for here again Lewis is invincible. The last serious attempt to defeat him was made in 1926, when his opponent was none other than Comrade John Brophy, the veteran Social-

¹ *Misleaders of Labor*, by William Z. Foster. Trade Union Educational League: New York.

ist rabble-rouser, who has since repented of his offense and been rewarded with the CIO directorship. At the time, Comrade Brophy's supporters charged Lewis with victory by wholesale falsification of the vote. Foster described the election as follows:

Lewis officially claimed 173,000 votes as against 60,000 for Brophy. This would make a total of 223,000 votes cast for an actual membership of 273,000, a manifest fraud, as returns from hundreds of locals, assembled by the Left-wing, showed that not more than one-third of the miners actually voted. Lewis stole votes wholesale, both for himself and from Brophy. In District 30, Kentucky, which has no actual dues-paying members, 2686½ were reported cast for Lewis and none for Brophy, a clear steal. In District 31, West Virginia, with an average of 377 dues-payers, 14,000 votes were stolen for Lewis. In District 19, Tennessee, with only 482 real members, 3962 votes were reported for Lewis and 15 for Brophy. In the Pittsburgh district, one-third of the locals voting had no existence except on paper.

After this referendum, Brophy and the other election opponents of Lewis were kicked out of the organization.

Such are some of the historical details concerning the ruthless trade-union program which has carried Lewis to his present glory. It is not a pretty story. But its dictatorial technique has become an integral part of the present-day

Lewis program. When the man mouths the word "Democracy" in his glowing promises for the workingman's future, it will be well to keep in mind the record of autocracy in his own union.

III

In any survey of Lewis' national Labor career, it is quite apparent that the flash-point occurred when Franklin D. Roosevelt moved into the White House. Unquestionably, the vision of a broader scope of action had been in John L.'s mind since first he seized control of the UMW. But it was not until the industrial crash of 1929 threatened complete collapse to his UMW power that the vision became dominant. While Lewis had been efficiently exterminating his rivals within the union, the strength of the organization had been bleeding away in the decline of the coal industry. From a peak membership of 500,000 in the early 'Twenties, the UMW dwindled, under the Depression, to a shadow. In the referendum of December, 1932, the total vote cast for international officers plunged to the appalling figure of 89,000. But concealing his fading power by a continued payment of A. F. of L. *per capita* taxes on 400,000 members,

Lewis was ripe for a gamble when Dr. Roosevelt appeared upon the scene.

It is not necessary to repeat in detail the story of how Lewis exploited the NRA experiment. Reading the President's mind, he boldly took the chance of using the Roosevelt name to force organization of non-union coal districts. Before the ink was dry on the National Recovery Act, organizers for the UMW were storming through every coal camp, proclaiming that President Roosevelt wanted unionization of the industry. The gamble worked. Non-union operators hesitated until too late. Before the Roosevelt Administration was four months' old, Lewis had run his lodge membership up to 500,000, and, more important, had captured the non-union districts of West Virginia and western Pennsylvania.

This coup made Lewis the most important Labor figure in the Administration. Allying himself with Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers in the NRA program, he forced William Green into a secondary position. Madame Perkins, General Hugh Johnson, Edward F. McGrady, became his ballyhooers. Little by little, the public got around to recognizing that Lewis — not Green — was the angel over the White

House. And thus heady with victory, it is probable that Lewis anticipated slight opposition from A. F. of L. leaders to his dream of dominating the Federation. But he miscalculated.

As the issue upon which to ride to overlordship, Lewis selected the old cry of Industrial Unionism — for forty years the slogan of the Socialists and Syndicalists. And no issue could have been more unfortunate from the standpoint of mastering the A. F. of L. It was a proposal which struck directly at the most powerful union heads. Anxious, however, to avoid a costly split, the Federation's Old Guard first attempted to soothe Lewis by meeting him half-way. At the San Francisco convention in 1934, where Lewis tossed the issue into the open, a resolution was passed providing for the chartering of industrial unions in the automotive and other mass-production industries, but reserving the authority to launch such unions in the sanctity of the Federation's Executive Council. This was compromise, not victory. Hence, during the following year, Lewis continued to increase his political strength by alliances with Left-wing unions.

When the Federation assembled again in Atlantic City in 1935, Lewis opened the battle with a vic-

tory over Matthew Woll, one of the most powerful of his Conservative opponents, driving through a resolution requiring Woll to quit the presidency of the National Civic Federation, an organization engaged in fighting trade-union Radicalism. It was a victory that swelled Lewis' prestige with the Left-wingers—but it was the last he was to win in an A. F. of L. convention. Sponsoring a resolution to speed industrial unionism by taking the initiative out of the hands of the Executive Council, Lewis turned on the taps of oratory. Taking the floor in his best form, he cried that "at San Francisco they seduced me with fair words!" The delegates promptly realized that this was the final decision which would determine Lewis' future attitude toward the old unions. But for all John L.'s fervent spell-binding, the convention voted him down, 18,025 to 10,924. Lewis recognized that this was the end to his giddy vision of sovereignty in the A. F. of L. Shortly after the convention closed, he assembled Hillman, David Dubinsky, and other Left-wing leaders and launched the CIO. His suspension from the Federation the following Summer merely formalized a secession which was already a fact.

Lewis was now confronted with the most crucial test of his career. Could he create an opposition union against the established power of the hundred or more internationals which still remained in the A. F. of L.? Always before, every attempt to build a dual union had ended in disaster. The Socialist Trades and Labor Alliance, the American Labor Union, the IWW, the Trade-Union Unity League—these were dismal memories. And all had been industrial unions. It is proof of Lewis' realism that he comprehended that the key to CIO victory lay outside the Labor movement. Just as in 1933 he had used the name of Roosevelt to revive the dying UMW, he now perceived that the President was his best bet in winning his struggle with the A. F. of L. But to bring Dr. Roosevelt into camp, Lewis realized that it would be necessary to bind him by ties of self-interest. Such an opportunity was presented by the approaching 1936 campaign. If Lewis could show in this struggle that his support was of greater value to the President than that of the old A. F. of L., he knew he could count on Presidential backing in the post-election period. And such backing would spell the margin of victory in the coming clash to unionize mass-producing industries.

Having shaped his strategy, Lewis postponed the announced organization drives in the automobile and coal industries until late in 1936, in order to concentrate upon the Roosevelt campaign. He shoved himself into the center of the Democratic picture by endorsing Dr. Roosevelt's re-election at the UMW convention in January, 1936, and by forcing through a resolution pledging mine-union money to the President's campaign. (Actually, the UMW contributed \$342,000. To thwart Green and the A. F. of L., he organized the Labor Non-Partisan League, composed of the CIO unions together with his old companion of NRA days, the "always available" Major George L. Berry. Whooping up the fact that Hutcheson, Coe-field, and other members of the Federation's Executive Council were openly supporting Governor Landon, Lewis set himself to the delicate job of convincing the President that the CIO was a first line of Labor defense.

The campaign waged by the Non-Partisan League was clever in strategy: in contrast to the lesser Roosevelt support offered by Green, the Lewis drive set an all-time high for Labor political effectiveness. While Dr. Roosevelt would undoubtedly have been

elected without this aid, nevertheless in such old-time Republican fortresses as Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Michigan, the Lewis tactics turned the tide. In Michigan, where New Deal Governor Frank Murphy won by a slim margin, the Lewis vote was decisive—a fact on which John L. was later to capitalize handsomely.

The events which have taken place since the November election confirm the sagacity of Lewis' strategy. His CIO victories in mass-production fields have all been essentially political. Launching his big push after the Election, he found slight resistance among the once-arrogant open-shops. Employers, palsied by the Roosevelt tidal wave, were afraid to utilize protective measures against a CIO which was captained by a White House favorite. In places where resistance was at a maximum, Lewis' organizers did not hesitate to use the President's name to bag employees. In New Jersey, for instance, agents of the CIO printed a leaflet in the form of "A letter from the President", informing the palpitant workers that "President Roosevelt wants you to join the union".

The first major offensive of the CIO was the General Motors strike in Michigan, at the turn of this

year. On the surface, such an assault seemed a frantic gamble. Actually, however, Lewis knew from the start that there was no danger of losing face. With the "Liberal" Murphy at Lansing and Madame Perkins at Washington, the CIO leader was certain at all times of the official support needed to block GM counter-measures. When Murphy indicated that he was ready, under certain circumstances, to use the State militia to defend the Flint sit-downers against local authorities, the full strength of Lewis' hand was at last apparent to General Motors.

Another shrewdly-calculated effect of the GM strike was to give the Republic a sober insight into Lewis' singular influence over the President. Lewis had learned through experience with the New Deal that up to a certain point, the President could be bullied. And in this instance, he took the precaution of doing his bullying in the open. The subsequent help which the two Roosevelt aides, Madame Perkins and Governor Murphy, gave to the strikers revealed the wisdom of the move, and won the strike.

This paper victory over General Motors was the act which Lewis needed to turn the CIO drive into

a bandwagon rush. The partial surrender of United States Steel, General Electric, Chrysler Motors, and others disclosed that at least the Wall Street captains of finance had no particular desire to combat a Roosevelt-supported Lewis. In the case of Steel, there was the further realization that in the event of a strike, the Earle-Kennedy Administration was ready to do more than Governor Murphy of Michigan in giving assistance to the CIO.

As a result of these highly successful maneuvers conducted on a national scale, Lewis today claims that his lodge membership has topped the 2,000,000 mark. And he talks confidently of an eventual CIO enrollment of 10,000,000.

IV

From the standpoint of appraising the future of industrial relations in this country, the most significant action in Lewis' career is his alliance with the Communists. No political leader in America has ever performed a more extraordinary about-face. Until the beginning of his friendship with Sidney Hillman, Lewis for years had been the reigning devil in the demonology of Labor Radicals. Communists were not only expelled from the UMW, but were slugged and

beaten by strong-arm operatives. In fact, some were pointed out and betrayed to the police by union agents. And in 1927, Lewis spent \$20,000 in union money to syndicate to the daily press a gaudy series of "exposés" of Soviet activities in the United States, in the hope of arousing the public against the "Red menace".

Yet it is proof of his opportunism that today, not only has he completely reversed this lifelong attitude, but has taken on God-like stature among the Socialists and Communists whom he was so lately exorcising. The climax was reached in a recent series of hero-worshipping biographical sketches of Lewis in the *New Masses*, with the *Führer's* once-hated face decorating the cover of this Communist Party publication. In the grandiose United-Front schemes of the Comrades, Lewis is obviously now cast in the role of the American Caballero.

For example, three of Lewis' chief supporters today are John Brophy, Patrick Toohey, and Powers Hapgood. Of these class-war entrepreneurs, Lewis wrote in the May 1, 1928, issue of the *United Mine Workers Journal*:

The Save-the-Union Committee under the leadership of John Brophy, Patrick Toohey, and Powers Hapgood and a

few others has been doing its dirtiest to capture the United Mine Workers and to transform this splendid organization into a Communist organization.

In 1930, Brophy, Hapgood, and Adolph Germer, the latter a militant Socialist, issued a call for a secession convention of miners at Springfield, Illinois, to create the National Miners' Union, affiliated with the Communist Trade-Union Unity League. Speaking at the Indianapolis convention of the UMW in the same year, Lewis denounced Brophy, Hapgood, and Germer as "fakers, traitors to the unions, opportunists, and purveyors of every falsehood, slander, and deception". But strange to relate, Brophy today is the executive director of the CIO; Germer is the general organizer; and Hapgood is field representative. The fourth member, Toohey, is district organizer of the Communist Party in Pennsylvania, and received high credit from the Comrades for his part in staging the CIO's first militant show — the RCA-Victor strike at Camden, New Jersey.

Now the extent to which Lewis has encouraged such carefree revolutionary hopes is a matter for debate. Two theories may be advanced to explain his sweeping change of heart. The first is that John L. has come to appreciate the

high cash-value of Socialist and Communist fanaticism in organizational campaigns, and that he is happily exploiting the Comrades to build his CIO. The other theory is that under the influence of such persuasive cronies as Hillman and W. Jett Lauck, he has undergone an emotional change that has swung him far to the Left.

This latter philosophic explanation can be rationally dismissed as at odds with Lewis' historical character. Like all mass-leaders interested solely in an acceleration of power, ideas to Lewis are weapons, not ends. In the manner of Dr. Roosevelt, he is an opportunist experimenter, ready to toss both instruments and cause out the window if it suits his program. The more likely explanation is that John L. has discovered that the Comrades can be highly useful to him at this exciting stage of his adventures. He is quite aware of the articulate power of the Left-wing intelligentsia to color his publicity. He has calculated the value to the CIO of the garment unions, nourished on Socialism. He has, so to speak, secured his UMW bridges behind him by making deals with Brophy, Hapgood, Germer, *et al.*, and by kicking them upstairs to juicy CIO jobs. Particularly, he knows that a red-hot Communist

or Socialist is an extremely able operative to use against the Bosses in the gouging tactics of the New Labor Warfare.

In the drive against U. S. Steel, Communist Party members directed CIO work among the foreign-born elements, although to avoid the Soviet stigma, the crusade was conducted under the name of the "Fraternal Orders Committee". But CIO officials participated openly in the "Committee" meetings, and in Chicago its offices were located in the suite of Van Bittner, regional director of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee. The "Committee" was headed and directed throughout by Bill K. Gebert, Communist Party hack, and in Chicago by John Schmies, a member of the Central Committee of the Party. In the automotive campaigns, rank-and-file Communists and Socialists have constituted the backbone of the sit-downers, as revealed in an article in the April issue of *THE MERCURY*, "Revolution in Michigan". The same situation has prevailed in the drives to organize the rubber workers and the American merchant seamen.

Boastful proof of the Communist influence in American Labor warfare comes nowadays even from Soviet Russia itself. On April 24,

the New York *Times* printed the following dispatch from its Moscow bureau:

The CIO strike activities in the United States are described as a militant Labor movement which the American Communist Party is energetically supporting, in a long article by Moissaye J. Olgin, the New York correspondent of *Pravda*, just published in that newspaper. Mr. Olgin added that the success of that movement is of great political significance. He said that large numbers of workers are being organized for the first time and that the proletariat is resorting to strikes as part of the class struggle.

"The Communist Party is taking a very active part in the work of uniting the workers of the basic branches of industry," wrote *Pravda's* correspondent. "It is helping to prepare direct mass strikes. It is energetically struggling against the disintegrating policy of labor union bureaucracy and for the unification of labor unions into a single powerful organization on the basis of the committee's program."

But having used the Comrades almost to the point of physical exhaustion, it is doubtful that Lewis wants to carry them with him into his ultimate CIO citadel. For already he has hinted that his new organization will not be constituted as the A. F. of L., *i.e.*, a mere federation of autonomous unions. The CIO, if he can swing Hillman and Dubinsky around to his way of thinking, will be a monolithic structure with power pyramided at

the very top. In fact, in the case of three new CIO unions — automobiles, steel, and radio — Lewis has upset A. F. of L. precedent by insisting upon negotiating major agreements direct with the employers. And in the instance of the steel workers, he has taken a tip from Wall Street by retaining the union income in the central CIO treasury. Obviously, he is building for an absolute dictatorship. And in any such organization, there will be no place for the "borings-from-within" of power-hungry Marxians. Unless the individualistic Comrades toe the line drawn by John L.'s iron-shod boot, they will find themselves under the lash of the CIO's own Cossacks.

All this is not to say that the ultimate CIO may not prove to be the vestibule of the Socialist State in America. In action, Lewis is following Marxian tactics, with the assistance of the best brains of the Republic's Left-wing organizations. Communists have talked for years about the Class Struggle. Lewis, with the aid of the vacillating New Deal Administration, has made it a reality in American life. These facts are important, because they *are* facts. Otherwise, interpretations of the CIO, whether written by John L. Lewis, Dr. Roosevelt, the captains of industry,

or Liberal leaders, are not very important because they obscure the knowledge that Labor's struggle for power today follows Communist and anti-Liberal lines. Whenever Communism is able to create class-warfare, it proves its major thesis and achieves its major objective.

If Lewis, with one eye always on the social horizon, decides that the pathway to power leads further and further to the Left, he is capable of driving in that direction more ruthlessly than the most academic disciple of Karl Marx. But his decision will be one of expediency, not of ideology. Which means that it is in his character to press just as ruthlessly to the Right, if he becomes convinced that his future belongs to Fascism. For the present, John Lewis is more interested in safeguarding his alliance with Franklin Roosevelt than in accepting slaps on the back from Earl Browder and Norman Thomas.

Despite the frantic pleas of his Left-wing intimates, he will move reluctantly toward an independent Farmer-Labor Party or a United Front so long as he continues to secure important objectives through an entrenched Democratic Administration. Moreover, the CIO flanks are perilously exposed to the attacks of the still powerful A. F. of L., with 2,500,000 loyal

members. Quite obviously, Lewis cannot outpace the Roosevelt army with his unseasoned CIO shock-troops, lest the Federation raid his camp in Washington. The CIO's success has so far been Roosevelt-induced. Not until the A. F. of L. is out of the way, once and for all, can Lewis reveal his true plans for the future.

Meanwhile, he is content to remain a brooding figure in the national scene. He bitterly denounces Fascism, denies any official affiliation with the Democratic, Republican, or Socialist Parties, derides suggestions that he is a Communist, plays the part of a good Roosevelt man, calls Farley "Jim", and otherwise tries to indicate that he is first for Labor, and will go along with anyone who will work for the Cause. But unfortunately, allegiance to "Labor" is a familiar catch-phrase in this modern world of self-made dictators. Such allegiance may justify the support of certain wishful-thinkers and professional "Liberals". But the fact remains that the present state of class-warfare in America, if sufficiently prolonged and aggravated, will constitute the death of genuine Liberalism, the fulfillment of Communist prophesy, and an excuse for the accession of one type or another of Authoritarian State.

CAPTAIN ROBERT BELKNAP GOES WEST

BY LINCOLN COLCORD

In which one of the vanishing Americans speaks his honest mind about the corruption and malfeasance in government which the present-day citizen so spinelessly condones.

HELLO! Come in. I'm damned glad to see you.
Well, here I am . . . hell of a place for a man to be.
Bed's made for better pidgin. Ha! I feel
Like some old hulk that wants to keep on sailing:
Stranded . . . I guess the sand has made around me.
Is anything more useless than a wreck?
I can remember coming up through Ombay Pass
In the northeast monsoon in the ship *Wandering Jew*.
You know how the tide runs there like a mill-race,
With green water to mark the coral patches;
A nasty place when the wind heads you off.
And there was a big wooden ship perched on a reef,
Sticking her snags of teeth up to the sun;
We went right by her — she'd been there a long time.
It made me shiver to look at her; I always hated
Dead things and broken things and things gone by.

What's that? Outside the window! . . . Nothing, I guess.
I have these spells, my head don't seem to work;
I keep hearing strange sounds to windward.
Funny how life goes back on you at last;
You aren't so able as you thought you were.
Well, what can you expect? Who's growling? Why
Should anyone want to hang around, roost on a reef,
With spars broken and bare ribs showing through?
I'd rather sink at sea and have it over.

I've lived a long life and am tired of it,
And any day death wants to she can come.
Wait — let me fold my arms the way they do:
Now won't I make a God-damned handsome corpse?
Ha! What are you jumping for? You can't dodge death.
Haven't you lived? Then aren't you glad to die?
It's death that gives the breeze of life an edge.

II

Has it ever struck you how we spend our lives
Sailing around the world and carrying cargo,
Seeing how trade goes on, and seeing how
Nations are all alike, and men the same
In China or in Russia or at home,
And trade the same, that makes the nations live;
And then we quit the sea and settle down
To watch them make a monkey of the show?

Politics! God, it seems to be the art
Of doing everything wrong for the devil of it,
Just to make work in cleaning up the mess;
The trick of never arriving where you are bound.
Set your course for the rocks and let her go!
Heave her to in a calm, and crack on sail
When one of those black squalls shows up to windward!
And if you take the masts out of her, all the better;
They'll make you President for that, the next election.

Or Congress, there — a forecastle five-hundred strong,
With every man his own sea-lawyer. Ha!
As if speeches could fill a vessel's sails,
Or laws trim weather braces; who's to go
Aloft to furl the courses off the Horn,
Or man the pumps in silence? All they know
Is how to bring their grub aft in a gale of wind,
Because the salt-beef hash has rope yarns in it,
Yammering about their rights with the ship in danger.

The ablest politician is the man
Who spends the nation's money needlessly,
But makes the people think it is important;
The more he fails, the more they talk about him,
And talk is what he wants to build his name.
The lubberly fools! They ask to be misgoverned;
They wouldn't know what seamanship was for.
They like to sail her wild in any weather,
Never a look at the chart, never a question
Of how she heads or where she's going to fetch,
Driving along with only the wind for master.

You couldn't run a ship the way they run
The nations. . . . No, by God, we had to lay
A course, and trim our sails to use the wind,
And figure our position without error,
And beat the sea with judgment, and make a landfall;
Or take our medicine — not be excused.

God defend us! Foolish and blind! Foolish and blind!
Do you think the fog brings safety, do you think
The rocks aren't there because you don't see them?
Do you think a nation can't strike and go down?
For Christ's sake, haul your wind! Shake out the topsails!
You're on a lee shore now, in company
With other ships that couldn't navigate,
And other men who tried to lead by following.

There's something up aloft that makes me nervous.
Hear it? Something loose and flying adrift.
Listen! What is it, what is it? Call the mate!
Let me get up. I want to go on deck.
There she cracks! I knew it! The fore topmast!
Send me the mate, I say. I told the bastard
To call me when it breezed on. . . . So help me God,
Give me a hand . . . the masts are coming down!

III

What was I saying? . . . Well, it doesn't matter.
I never liked the land: a place where men
Can't seem to work life out; they'll never learn
That truth is only common sense and reason,
Like a straight course, or like an honest answer,
And that you can't run anything on lies.

Nothing tidy or shipshape about the land,
Ropes leading wrong and gear all tangled up,
Yards cock-billed and Irish pennants flying,
Men spoiling the beauty that God gave them,
No one in charge to straighten out the deck,
And no one aft to be responsible.

A crazy, mean performance; all the values
Seem end-for-end; the things that landsmen go by
Would lose a ship before she gained her offing;
The life ashore seems mainly given up
To building strong defenses against error.
No one seems glad, as when a man sets out
To handle his own ship, meet his own fortune,
And pay his price for what he fails to win.
The landsman seems to have but one ambition:
To find a quiet, safe, and shallow harbor,
And never lift his anchors from the mud.

The only men ashore I'd trust my ship to
Are failures, men who laughed at the wrong time
Because they couldn't stand the make-believe.
They are the only happy landsmen I've noticed,
The ones who dared to call their souls their own.

IV

Whenever I came in from sea, in the old days,
I'd feel something closing in around me;

I wasn't free, I couldn't speak my mind,
I had to be careful or I'd lose a dollar.
Something hung on the land like a fever,
Fear and doubt, cutting the soul of action,
Sharpening everything false, blunting everything true.

But when I sailed again, and felt the sea
Up through my own ship's deck, and saw her beauty,
And looked aloft at her tall spars and canvas
Against the sky, I'd shake myself and breathe
The ocean air, and let it sink down deep
Into my blood, and know that I'd come back
To something braver in the scheme of things.
Now I was whole again; now I was all myself;
Myself against the ocean and the sky;
And that was all I asked for—no protection:
Nothing beyond the open right to fail.

God, let me go to sea again! My guts are heavy
With all this holding back and dragging down;
Work that is only time-serving; ideas
That land us nowhere; loud high-sounding words,
Empty of meaning, raised to drown out truth
And stop the sound of voices calling order.

I think death must be more like the sea,
Clean and pure and deep, no muddiness,
Open and wide, a dangerous place for fools,
But safe enough for men who know their way.
Blue water! Shining skies! The endless days!
Wind and sail, and the reaches of the dawn!
Work to be done — no rotting among the worms;
Another voyage to make, another landfall,
A new coast and a new line of trade.
By God, you'll have to keep your weather-eye peeled
Among the dangers there beyond the grave!

And after that, who cares? I'm looking forward
To sight that land and bring it close aboard,
Smell the air, and watch the hills grow nearer,
See what the people look like when they come off,
Taste of their fruit, and hear the latest news.
I'd like to meet this God they talk about;
He strikes me as a square sort of fellow.
You can't blame Him for the mutinies and disasters;
He's done His best, an able and faithful shipmaster
With a damned unmanageable crew on his hands.

V

Who sung out? Yes, I'm coming! Wait a minute. . . .
Hell, what's the matter with me? No one called.
Only the wind around the southern windows.

One trip we met a Tartar off the Horn,
Bucking westerly gales for thirty days.
I had a fine young fellow mate with me,
Ben Stinson, from the back part of the town;
But between getting hurt and being young
He lost his nerve; one night he came and begged me
To give it up and run for the Indian Ocean.
Why should I see his face now? A handsome devil;
He died of fever aboard his first command.
I laughed at him and said, "When you are master
You won't quit with all your spars aloft."
He hung his head and stood thinking it over.
"Yes, sir, I see the difference," he said.
"Why do they always make the right things hard?"

I wish the boys today could learn that lesson;
It helps to face it — life will be the same.
Machines can't run the world, or save mankind
From stress that only seamanship could cover.
Each generation has to round the Horn.

I wish men would be braver, or would remember
From age to age, or would put something down
As proved, and not depart from it thereafter;
I wish we could find out our own misfortune,
Or see that fate is only what we ask for,
And leave life plain and simple, as it comes.

What is this brightness all around? Is the day breaking?
Go up and take a look. . . . I want to know.
It seems so still. . . . Look out! It's times like this
That catch you. Oh, be careful! Take no chances.
I hear a breeze coming across the water,
And there she heels to it! Look out, I say!
It's making up too fast. . . . Take in the royals!
We're in for a shift of wind . . . a sudden change. . . .



THE ART OF BODY SNATCHING

BY ABRAHAM GOOTNICK

Getting post-mortem permission from the dear departed's sorrowing relatives is a ticklish job — but Dr. Gootnick describes its remarkable technique with considerable relish.

IN YOUR very first days as an interne, and before the starch is out of your uniform, you are initiated into the major hospital sport of hunting the post-mortem. No course in the medical curriculum has trained you for it; no hospital syllabus deals with the rigors and excitement of the hunt; the prize is never twice the same. Yet the aptitude, inventiveness, and endurance displayed in obtaining post-mortem permission will measure your final standing with colleagues and superiors. For every day in a large city hospital, patients die carrying within them the answers to many hours of puzzling and head-scratching and searching of medical books. Thus the hunt is for the innards of the victim which hold the ultimate solution to the problems he presented as a patient; the prize is permission to do the autopsy.

In the nature of things, with rare

exceptions, when a brother or a father or a baby dies, it is the doctor who has killed him. In our teeming slums, which abound in sturdy, migrating, adventurous stock, direct action against the murderer of the innocent poor is not unknown. Also, a preponderant portion of the clientele is made up of devout Catholic Italians and equally devout Jews. It is from these grieving and prostrated mothers, wives, and orphans that you — the despoiler of the family — must wheedle, beg, demand, bully, cajole, threaten, bribe, and swindle permission to mangle the poor departed. The technique has become fairly standardized, and variations have been worked out for all the usual types of opposition. Where the mettle of an interne is tried is in the delivery, which is a strictly individual set of histrionics elaborated by each man as best suited to his own appearance, voice, and sex

appeal. An interne who achieves a name in the art of post-mortem hunting has marked himself as a fellow of infinite tact, a man capable of great perseverance, unusual resourcefulness, and quick change of pace. He is slated for a distinguished career, and will make almost as much money in medicine as he would selling Fuller brushes.

The universal and time-tested opening in post-mortem hunting is the appeal to the higher altruism. You pick out the most civilized-looking and self-possessed member of the grief-stricken family — the one who does the most consoling and the least caterwauling. To him you address your little spiel on Progress and the Brotherhood of Man.

"Mr. Fineberg," you say, and your voice is slow and earnest, "Mr. Fineberg, I needn't tell you how sorry I am. Dr. Wood and I and every member of the staff worked night and day hoping to pull your mother through [here your face looks drawn and you are very tired]. We failed, not because we didn't try everything we know, but because there are things still not known about this particular disease. Now you are an intelligent man. I know just how you must feel at such a time, and it isn't pleasant for me to mention this.

But we want your permission to find out just what it was that killed your mother, so that the next mother who comes here with the same ailment may perhaps go home alive to her family."

If Mr. Fineberg is the man you hope he is, he will emit a faint glow when you mention his intelligence — and the rest is just a heart-to-heart talk. All you have to do now is listen with sympathetic curiosity for some thirty minutes to the sort of woman his mother was, and put in at appropriate intervals a faint sigh or an understanding nod. He will sign the printed forms and shake hands with you, and ask you as one man to another not to mention the affair to that bunch of women in his family.

But Mr. Fineberg, on the other hand, may be sourly skeptical of medicine in general and of your attainments in particular. Your sorrow and condolence, the mantle of intelligence you bestow upon him, your plea for suffering humanity — all are so much wind. He will listen, surly and uneasy; but as you speak, his oblique, hostile stare dampens your glibness and your expectations. This is the time for a change in tactics.

An experienced interne will never, of course, so far misjudge his quarry as to use the sweetness-

and-light tactics on a tough customer. Suppose you've overheard some talk of insurance in a lull of wailing. You call Mr. Fineberg to one side—you are brisk and can spare only a moment in passing. The old Mr. Fineberg was insured? In that case it will be necessary to make a little examination. The insurance companies, you see, always demand proof of the cause of death before they pay. Now where are those slips? Oh, Miss Simmons, would you look in the desk and see if there are any insurance company slips there? That's fine, thanks. You sign right here, Mr. Fineberg; yes, that will be all right now.

II

Does the family abound in children? Then take the paterfamilias into your confidence. You don't think it's necessary for him to worry the mother prematurely, but there is a chance that poor little Camelia may have suffered from a family disease. If he is willing, you can make sure and let him know within an hour. Then, if everything is all right, he will at least be certain the other children are safe.

"Oh, no-no-no!"

Well—then you will have to leave it to the Board of Health.

But you thought at a time like this, you could spare him a lot of trouble. Then, too, you would make only one small cut and leave no mark. . . . However, it's up to him. Would he just speak to the nurse when he has made up his mind; she will tell him what to do.

The easiest of all to tackle for p.m. consent are the colored folk. In the presence of death, theirs is a truly philosophic matter-of-factness, and often an appeal to their curiosity, a promise to tell them of the findings, is enough to obtain permission. One grizzled old fellow would not sign consent unless he were permitted to witness the autopsy on his son. Another thought it would be all right, but he needed a drink—he signed for four bits. When a more citified Harlemiter does balk at the indignity of molesting his dead, the most effective line is shameless intimidation:

"Look here, Mr. Bates, I may as well be frank with you. From your wife's symptoms, the chief doctor here suspects she took poison. Now we're not in the detective business, but it's important for us to know what sickness can produce symptoms like poisoning. If you let us do this, we take one quick look inside, and the whole

thing requires only a few minutes. If you don't, we are legally compelled to call in the people from the Medical Examiner's office. And then, we never find out what we want to know, they make a mess of the body, the papers splash your name and picture all over town, the police ask questions. . . ." Mr. Bates, innocent and terrified, must be made of rare stuff to withstand the menace of the Law.

The game of p.m. hunting also abounds in heroic legends. The indomitable masters of the trade include the two who rode at midnight to an undertaking parlor, armed with tools and forged permission slips. They risked expulsion and headlines in the press. But they did the autopsy on a rare case of infantile anemia and achieved minor fame with their case-report in a medical journal. Another zealot trekked into darkest Harlem on a Winter night to get the coveted signature. Once, when a Bowery smoke-hound arrived to claim his dead wife after five days, one of the boys drank him back into forgetfulness in a nearby saloon and the wife was "done" as an unclaimed case.

Several times a year, p.m. consent on important and controversial cases is obtained before death

by means of a trade for a free (city-paid) transfusion. There is a rule against asking permission while the patient is alive—the temptation presumably might arise to speed the parting guest. But although this rule is widely disregarded, ante-mortem consent is a recognized jinx. Time and again a patient already at the gates of the Kingdom seems to take new life on being sold short, and turns the tables on all prognosticators. In every hospital office there is a stack of signed permission slips whose subjects have embarrassingly recovered and left for home with guts untouched by human hand.

III

It may happen that all blandishments and skulduggery fail when an autopsy simply must be performed. Your attending surgeon, say, has repaired a perforated peptic ulcer, and on the fifth post-operative day, after a promising start, the patient dies of generalized peritonitis. Was he brought in too late? Or has there been a leak in the suture line? An examination of the sewed-up stomach is the only available check on the surgeon's technique.

"You get this post if it costs you an arm," the eminent surgeon says

to the interne — and leaves for his office.

Team work may turn the trick where all previous assaults have failed. You have by this time used all your wiles, all your patience and ingratiating eloquence, but your man remains obdurate. Well, now you get sore. Make sure he hasn't too much weight on you — just in case — then let him have it. You glare, you seethe; by God, this is more than you can bear. So this is the sort of ignorant moron you kill yourself for! Does he know about the night you stayed up in the operating room? Was he here all the days and nights when you nursed, babied, sweated over his brother? If he were not a thick-headed idiot he wouldn't stand there like a stubborn mule, but would try to appreciate what the hospital has done and why it has asked for an autopsy. But you've wasted enough time on him. Just one word of advice: He'd better be damned careful never to be a patient where you can lay hands on him!

You slam out of the ward and leave your victim spluttering, clenching his fists, and on the verge of mayhem. And here is your team-mate's cue. He walks over, shaking his head ruefully, and puts a pacifying arm about the shoulders of the glowering citizen. As he

leads him to a chair, your partner's voice drips with the honey of understanding.

"I'm awfully sorry, Mr. Kenny. Please don't take this seriously. Everybody around here knows this fellow is a little crazy. But he's the best doctor in this hospital, and he kills himself for the patients. Some day he's going to be a great man, and you'll be proud that he bawled you out. Have a cigarette? You see, he worked so hard on your brother and it didn't save his life. So he feels he's got to find out why the treatment failed. He's sore because he thinks you don't understand, but I know how you must feel after such a loss. . . . Listen, will you do me a personal favor? You sign this, and I'll see to it myself that there isn't a mark left on your brother. Will you do it for me? That's the stuff! You're all right, Mr. Kenny, believe me! My friend will be glad to apologize to you."

The tartar who will not furl his bristles with this soaping is given the last test — the trial by Superintendent Snodgren. "I want to see the superintendent!" yells the outraged Mr. Kenny, heedless of soothing syrup and flinging off the brotherly arm. "God damn it, I want to see the chief of this hospital! The papers will have something to say about this. First you

kill my brother, then you try to butcher him, and now you threaten me! Come on, Mary, John, Frank — we'll see about this!"

Foaming and indignant, the Kenny tribe is ushered into the Presence; the next minute Superintendent Snodgren's bellow fills the hall:

"Get me Dr. Wilson! I want Dr. Wilson here — this minute!"

You stand on the carpet, mute and quivering, and for ten minutes the torrent of Olympian wrath engulfs you. The wind-up is always the same: "I've warned you, Wilson, that I wouldn't stand for any more of this. And now, by the holy saints, I won't! This is the last time you'll bully decent citizens around here. You're through in this hospital!"

You slink away, and the chief sinks back into his chair, red-faced and panting. "These whipper-snappers! Just out of school and

they think the hospital is theirs. A human being is just another case to them. I'm sorry this had to happen, Mr. Kenny. Please sign this property form and call for the body at four."

So Mr. Kenny signs.

How does Snodgren get away with it? Well, he has been at it for twenty years. Once he had to leave for a hasty vacation when a neighbor from Little Italy went gunning for him. Several times rocks have crashed through the windows of the administration building and police had to be called. Some day someone will sue him for a million dollars, or have him kicked off the job, or stick a knife in his capacious belly. But more probably he will die at his appointed time of an enlarged prostate, and another man in white will be saying to the portly and grieving Mrs. Snodgren:

"Now you are an intelligent woman. . . ."



DON'T BE A COMPOSER

BY GEORGE ANTHEIL

A well-known musician confesses that the usual concomitant of his noble profession in superabundant America is an empty stomach dressed up in dingy, threadbare clothes.

IF MY son ever attempts to be a composer, I will do everything on earth to dissuade him. I have a right to speak in the matter for I am one of America's so-called "serious" composers, which means that I write symphonies, operas, and chamber music instead of Broadway ballads. I am a serious composer primarily because I love serious music, but I must add two more reasons: (1) I cannot write popular tunes, and (2) if I tried to do so, I would be blackballed by my colleagues. In other words, I am, at the age of thirty-six, a typical "promising composer", with a name already well-known in Europe and the United States.

Before presenting the evidence against my profession, I wish to forestall criticism by admitting that other artistic persons believe their lot to be quite as hard as mine. I know a fiction writer who complains that despite the excel-

lence of his novels and the acknowledgment of critics, his life is very difficult, and that he would never again choose a novelist's career. But I notice that he is sending his son to a writer's college. Moreover, my friend earns \$50,000 a year. My next-door neighbor is a painter: he gave up an excellent illustrating contract because he was "sick of it all". Yet he encourages his son to be a painter and gives him a daily lesson in his own studio.

But the serious American composer is hardly apt to make such a mistake; that is, providing he can afford to have children. Unlike other artists, he can never hope to exist upon the fruit of his labors. By this I mean that he cannot possibly sell the products he creates. There is not a music publisher in the country today who would buy the work of any American composer unless the score was so sim-

ple that it might eventually worm its way into that vast and mediocre repertoire of "teaching pieces". And presupposing that there exists a publisher who would actually purchase a serious work, the price tendered would not permit the composer to live for more than a month. In fact, the printing of such music in America is considered a favor; the composer is paid nothing in advance, being expected to thrive upon future royalties.

This procedure, of course, is often duplicated in the book-publishing trade. But almost any book will sell a few copies, whereas a symphonic score costing \$15 will attract at best only a handful of orchestral directors. Performance royalties seldom produce more than \$50 each, and few American symphonies are played more than twice a year. Yet it requires twelve months to write a good symphony, in addition to the sheer labor of transferring the notes to score-paper. Further, the composer is expected to furnish his own orchestral parts; otherwise the cost is deducted from future royalties. The expense of such copying will likely total \$300. So the moment a composer hands over his score to a "kindly" publisher, he starts out in the red — and he rarely gets out of it. The generous publisher, of

course, forgets the debt after many years of non-sales. Yet how is the composer to exist meanwhile?

There are, I admit, numerous prizes awarded for serious music, America being a great nation for prizes. I have won more than one scholarship myself, so I believe I am safe in assuming that in order to win one, you must first be a well-known composer. Yet how are you — a young nonentity — to become famous unless first you are able to eat, live, and create? My first prizes supported me for several years; I wrote a great deal; I secured numerous performances of my works in America and Europe; the interest of the musical public was tremendous. Nevertheless, after the prize money was expended, I was not one whit better off.

Prize money is comparable to the well-wishes of a wealthy patron: the only difference is that if you have the cash, you know just how long the temporary fairyland will last. But the poor young devils who accept patronage must forever sense the sword of Damocles trembling above their heads. Let the young composer make one error, receive one derogatory criticism, or have a jealous friend whisper into the August Ear, and out into the cold he will go, all the worse for his

period of grace. Unfit for the realities of life, he often turns hurriedly to Broadway, the radio, teaching, or, indeed, to anything.

If you believe the above observations apply only to a few composers, you are sadly mistaken. There are as many would-be "serious" composers in New York City as there are aspiring actresses. The new catalogue of *Modern Music* lists no less than 1000 serious American composers. But this roster includes only the *known* artists; there are thousands more, unknown, unsung, unheard, in every hamlet of the Republic. Hence, the problem is no longer one to settle over Park Avenue teacups; it is a national affair.

II

I myself am one of the few lucky composers: I have a knack of writing operetta scores for the movies, and I can, upon occasion, turn my hand to a magazine article. This keeps my family above water, so to speak. But the situation is not the same for my colleagues. Let me cite an example. As soon as an American composer becomes at all well-known, those "who are omnipotent" invariably find a way of salting him away in one teaching position or another. This omnipo-

tence is often exercised by the board of a well-meaning college. When this occurs, our American white-hope must teach a group of nondescript talents, take part in college life and politics, mind his conduct closely, and never dare to preach "radical" musical departures. Instead, he must be a conservative in order (a) to have his work published, (b) to win a prize, (c) to snare a patron, or (d) to find an adequate teaching post. Yet the great creative music of the past was not of the conservative brand: Chopin, Beethoven, Wagner, Debussy, and others were all revolutionists.

The public, of course, fails to apprehend this situation. Do not the conductors of great American orchestras often perform "radical" music? They do indeed—but in each of these cases the composer has first spent many months copying his own orchestral parts; his work will certainly go unpublished; and if he enjoys a rich patron before the concert, he may lose him afterward. One such catastrophe can set back a composer's career by ten years. Hence, years, not months, is the composer's way of counting time.

A talented composer must study his trade from childhood onwards. He must be an excellent pianist; he

must know how to sing his operas; he should certainly know how to conduct them. He must comprehend everything about music—for example, how the flute is played and how to write for it. He must have the same knowledge of fifty-odd other instruments. I feel safe in saying that no composer becomes at all competent in less than ten years. And by this I mean merely “competent”. It requires many more years to appease the critics.

Yet if the lot of a composer of any nationality is difficult, the American composer, unable even to sell his work for a pittance, faces a still more serious problem. He cannot hear his work, or have a vast public hear it *with* him. For please note—although Germany has eighty-three opera houses, and one European city, Paris, has nine symphony orchestras alone, America can boast of barely five first-class symphonies upon her entire Eastern coast. In this country, a symphony is a very expensive animal indeed; most cities find it a white elephant. Consequently the young American composer, unlike his European colleague, rarely has an opportunity to hear his work.

Let us, then, suppose that the American composer realizes his grim plight, and says: “All right,

I cannot get along over here; Europe is full of symphony orchestras; I at least want to hear my music even if I must go hungry for it.” Alas, he will promptly learn that Europe is highly skeptical of his talents, as well as of the talents of all Americans. Moreover, Europe has many laws restricting foreign musicians. So, blocked everywhere, faced by the falling dollar and the rising hostility toward Yankees in Europe, the disillusioned composer returns to his native shores.

Now miracles occasionally occur. Suppose the returned “serious” composer finds himself suddenly and unaccountably slated for performance by a great symphony orchestra. Let us suppose that ten or fifteen years of effort are at last rewarded by a gala performance. Then what happens? The day after the concert he reads the newspaper criticisms—and discovers his heroic labors have not been taken seriously. Often he is dismissed with a few smart sallies; American critics seem to be willing to sacrifice anybody (except themselves) for the sake of a good wise-crack. Apparently, it has never occurred to them that their chronic complaints about America’s lack of creative talent might be partially due to their own literary barbs.

Hence the American composer's chances of having his music panned are excellent. Let us — for general effect — now suppose that he becomes utterly discouraged. He is ready to give up — but what can he do next? A discouraged painter can often find a commercial market for his talents: advertising, magazine illustrating, stage designing, or portrait painting. A serious dancer, ready to give up the ghost, eventually finds a job on Broadway. A discouraged writer can usually land in Hollywood, with a weekly salary running into four figures. But the American composer is stymied. He cannot branch out into anything. For this unfortunate artist, all that remains is the arranging or copying of other people's music.

So if your brooding and artistic son wishes to compose, tell him that he will not only go hungry, but can only make a name for himself through a fluke. He will need to pay the greatest attention to nonsensical details. For instance, he must attend at least one tea-party a day; otherwise, Society will refuse to attend his concerts. If he wants the "right" people present always, he must learn how to drink abundant cocktails and highballs, he must acquire a su-

percilious chatter, and keep up-to-date with the ever-changing vogues of the day; he must dress beyond his pocketbook and entertain beyond his bank account. If he marries, the act will automatically exclude many women from his concert audiences; if he has business dealings with managers, publishers, and producers, he will find them surprised and hurt when asked for money. He will be invited to the country estates of the wealthy and he must accept; he will spend boring hours listening to their dull jokes and attending their noisy parties. (Afterward, these same people will tell everyone that they supported the Genius while he was composing the masterpiece played with such success by the Boston Symphony.) He must develop a shy, reticent manner; he must play the part of the "misunderstood artist"; he must pose, say brilliant things, and in general be everything but himself. And worst of all, he will have little time for actual composing.

If, after reading all this, your brooding son still wants to be a composer, let him. I'd be glad to teach him myself, free of charge. As a matter of fact, I have — often. These boys certainly must have the divine spark in them!

THE BATTLESHIP COMES BACK

By FLETCHER PRATT

*Join the Navy and see the next World War — without risk.
Battleship construction today is aimed at a perfection
which is likely to exclude possibilities of actual combat.*

IN THAT next general war—the inevitability of which is so cynically conceded by pacifists and militarists alike—the safest place to occupy will likely be the deck of a battleship. The new vessels of this class now building in England, France, Germany, Italy, the United States, Japan, and Russia represent the safest method of engaging in armed conflict yet devised by the mind of man. They are almost infinitely superior to any force that can be brought against them, except others of their kind; they possess means of offense so powerful that another naval war will probably be decided on a mere nose-count of their numbers; and if the war is not so decided, they will march out to battle only once. In fact, they represent the closing of a hundred-year cycle; for the first time in a century, true battleships are on the dockyard ways—warships that with their own re-

sources can destroy an indefinite number of any other type and which can take care of themselves under all circumstances.

The tendency in this direction was quite obvious at the close of the World War, but was obscured by the sermonizing of disarmament advocates who wished to abolish the battleship, and by the ballyhoo of such airplane enthusiasts as the late Mr. Arthur Brisbane. If it had not been for the collateral issues thus raised, it would have been noted long ago that not one first-class battleship was destroyed in action during the war. Two Austrian dreadnaughts were sunk by torpedoes with insignificant loss of life, one British ship was mined with no loss at all; one British, one Russian, and one Italian vessel of the class were eliminated by internal explosion (in the latter two cases by spies)—but these six incidents repre-

sented the total battleship casualties in a world at war for four years, during which every combatant was exerting all the ingenuity and force available to get rid of the ninety-odd battleships engaged. (It should be remarked that this applies only to first-line battleships. Second-raters, whether obsolescent battleships or battlecruisers, proved deathtraps. They were, as Winston Churchill predicted, "Eggshells striking at each other with hammers"; while the true battleships proved cocoanuts trying to damage each other with peashooters.)

Certainly no other combatant service can boast such a record of immunity to injury, particularly no branch rating as a main line of defense. Of course, it can be objected that one of the reasons for this immunity was that the World War battleships hid behind minefields and fortifications — which is to say that they failed to get hurt because they did not fight. The answer to this is twofold — that there is every reason to believe another naval war will see both sides engaged in the same policy of saving the big ships for the big smash, and that when the German and British battle fleets did clash at Jutland, they still suffered very little.

In that conflict, approximately 29,000 British sailors went into action aboard battleships; 213 became casualties, or one in every 131 engaged. In other types of British vessels, 29,000 sailors also went into the battle; they had 6410 casualties, or one in every 4.5. But the British battleships were in action for only a very short time? All right, consider the Germans: their battleship squadron was engaged furiously and took a heavy pounding; there were about 18,000 Germans involved; they had 187 casualties, or one in 96. Yet among the remainder of the German fleet, 2799 casualties were distributed among another 18,000 sailors, or one in 6.7.

The very incidence and method of the Jutland casualties point to the safety of the modern battleship. Most of them took place aboard five British vessels whose magazines exploded when a flash ran down the ammunition hoist from a turret-hit, and two German ships whose magazines were touched off by torpedoes. The possibility of a huge battleship being destroyed by one such hit has long been the main stock in trade of the anti-battleship school and if the truth of the proposition existed, it would form a serious objection to the construction of more such giant units. But it is in the highest degree

unlikely that any battleship will ever again be destroyed by either cause. Lack of protection against flash was the specific weakness of British ships in 1916, and the presence of such protection was the specific strength of the Germans. The same event that did away with the five English warships—penetration of a turret by a large-caliber shell which exploded inside—was repeated eight or nine times on the Teutonic side without any damage other than turret destruction. When the German ships were surrendered at the close of the war, their method of achieving such immunity became available for study to the naval powers of the world. And since that time, twenty years of research have been devoted to a solution of the problem.

The two German ships destroyed by torpedoes were veterans of such antiquity that they had no business among the giants of Jutland. On each side one modern first-class ship was struck by a torpedo; the British *Marlborough* did not even have to leave the line; the German *Seydlitz* got safely home, although in addition to her torpedo hit, she was suffering from the blows of twenty-one heavy shells which had wrecked her above-board and penetrated her armor at

the waterline. Later on in the war, the German *Moltke* was hit by two torpedoes without sinking, and a British monitor by three.

The point is that the torpedo, which at one time was expected to drive the battleship from the seas, has now been discounted by the mere size of the new ships and the internal subdivision which is its concomitant. The torpedo, of course, is still a formidable weapon; it will sink a destroyer every time and put a cruiser in bad shape. But it has increased only in range and accuracy, hardly at all in destructiveness, since the Russo-Japanese War. What was a deadly menace to the 10,000-ton ships of that day remains only a matter of concern to the 35,000-ton ships now building, especially since the improvement in torpedoes has been paralleled by a similar increase in the range and accuracy of anti-torpedo weapons.

It is the same with the dreadful airplane scare about which Gen. William Mitchell used to make such a pother before his translation to Valhalla. When the claims of the air enthusiasts are examined, they always trace back to the same fact—the sinking of the ex-German battleship *Ostfriesland* by U. S. Army bombers off the coast of New Jersey in 1921—the only

dreadnaught ever scuttled from the air under any conditions. But since that sinking was triumphantly announced, there has been some examination of the details, and it has come out that the *Ostfriesland* was leaking so badly before the bombing that she took in several tons of water during the run down from New York; that she did not (as any fighting ship would) have her pumps going; that some of her watertight doors were not closed; and that the bombs did not sink her by direct hits but by the "mining effect" of opening her seams, exploding in the water alongside.

The fact is that the plane bomb, like the torpedo, is subject to a law of diminishing return. In the nature of things, it cannot be more than a package of explosives dropped on a deck from above, and such explosives have the annoying habit of spending most of their force upward. Increasing the size of the package to the point where it will do real damage (say a 10,000-pound bomb) means increasing the size and decreasing the speed of the carrier to the point where it becomes a good target for modern anti-aircraft guns. The "mining effect" has been discounted by the same subdivision that has reduced the menacing roar of the torpedo to a whisper. It is

true that armor-piercing bombs have been designed (they are quite small) to go through a deck and explode in the bowels of a ship, but the new battleships now under construction have at least three armored decks. Hence, to reach a vital spot, the bombers must achieve the impossible feat of planting three bombs in exactly the same spot.

In short, the battleship has finally achieved immunity from everything but other vessels of her own class, and at the same time taken unto herself the speed of the old, frail battle-cruiser which crumpled up so readily in the World War. Doubtless there is a point at which the law of diminishing return will attack the capital ship as it has her enemies—the point at which so much size will be forced upon it that it can no longer be docked and handled. But that point is still far distant from an age in which we have passenger liners more than twice as bulky as the largest battleships afloat or under construction.

II

It is worth remarking that this new invincibility of the battleship is a swing back to the days of Nelson, when the battleship was the ship-

of-the-line, her greater size and sail-power giving her speed sufficient to run down anything afloat, her greater gun-power enabling her to smash all opponents, and her thicker sides affording her protection against other types of ship. The inventions of rifled cannon, armor, the quick-firer, high explosive, and the airplane eliminated the perfect battleship type for a hundred years, as other vessels specialized in one or another of these features. Only with the absorption of all into the new ships now building has the development completed its circle.

But in achieving this circle the battleship has so increased her size as entirely to alter the principles of naval war. Size and subdivision have increased cost out of all proportion to other species of ships. In George Washington's day, such an international infant as the United States (say, Siam, Greece, or Chile now) could calmly think about a dozen ships of the first line, while England kept sixty or seventy in commission. Now only the wealthiest nations can afford as many as ten. The result has been a tremendous increase in the proportionate value of the individual battleship, and a very great increase in what may be called her irreplaceability. With vessels that take four

or five years to build and which represent in each unit a considerable portion of the national defense appropriation, it is impossible to take chances. They cannot be dismissed on special missions in twos and threes like the first-line ships of sailing days. They must be held concentrated to meet the concentrated battle fleet of an enemy.

Even so, it seems improbable that there will be much battleship fighting in future wars, save in a special case like the potential Russo-Japanese conflict, where the party inferior in force has achieved a technical and moral superiority so great that it has no doubt of the issue of a general action. The enormous force concentrated in a single unit of a modern battleship fleet means that even a small advantage in numbers constitutes a superiority beyond all doubt or challenge. At the time of the Ethiopian sanctions in 1936, the Italians had in the Mediterranean only two less battleships than the British, and possessed an enormous superiority in that air-power which was to drive battleships from the ocean, yet the Italian admirals are reported as saying, "You are sending us to our death", when *Il Duce* told them they might have to fight the English.

There is an interesting paradox

here—the paradox of modern technical war, which is waged in the workshop long before the battleflags go up. The stronger and better a nation builds its battleship fleet, the less likely these ships will be to do any of the fighting for which they were designed. This same paradox lies behind the in-

dicated probability that the battleships now building will never go into action more than once—if they do that much. One battle will show where the superiority lies; will produce the World War case of a nation superior in battleships clamping upon its enemy a blockade of starvation.



TO ONE DEAD THESE YEARS

BY V. JAMES CHRASTA

YOU have forgotten the sun and the swing of it over your shoulders;
You have been dead these years.

Calmly, the light of impatience stilled in your eyes, you went,
Seeing the sun rise and fall in a sharp curve, without tears.

Time died for you but not for me, the beholder.

I have remembered; I have been patient a little, but not content.

The hard cry under the garden wakes and beats in its prisoning cell,
Feels the sun's rise and the warmth of it over the land,
Breaks from its cover in a confusion of green and the musk of asphodel. . . .

There have been springs these years, but you did not understand,
Come pressing the earth up, and the white cups of lilies in your hand. . . .

I have watched, but you did not emerge,
Not in the Spring, not with the first thrust of green or the lift of the sun. . . .

Time has been done.

Forsaken, placed out of mind and the mind's urge,
You have been patient, untroubled, no less precious, but gone.

ANY SEX TODAY?

BY ALAN DEVOE

The American's unconquerable urge to get something for nothing is exceeded only by his urge to get something forbidden. The height of absurdity is reached in this new racket.

Y ou probably get them. Virtually everybody does, or at any rate everybody between the ages of ten and ninety who bears a male name. Lawyers get them, farmers get them, and ministers get them in especial profusion. The "them" referred to being tasty little leaflets with context something like this:

SEX LIFE IN PATAGONIA

By Professor Alessandro Piazza, eminent Continental anthropologist. The most frank, daring, and startling book ever offered. Four hundred pages, lavishly illustrated with UNRETOUCHED photographs. Complete and unexpurgated account of such amazing subjects as: *Protoplastria subjecta* among Patagonian women. . . . Patagonian rites of Eros. . . . Priapic festivals. . . . The custom of *matricula rufigastra* among little boys. . . . Marriage customs. . . . Prevalence and tolerance of *Ambulatio Feli*, etc., etc.

Sex Life In Patagonia is strictly limited to 1000 numbered copies, bound in full Japan vellum. Priced at only \$12.50 per copy. BECAUSE OF ITS

NATURE, THIS BOOK CAN BE SOLD ONLY TO CLERGYMEN, PHYSICIANS, LAWYERS, MEMBERS OF THE LEARNED PROFESSIONS, AND SINCERE ADULT STUDENTS OF ANTHROPOLOGY.

Order now!

The offerers of these enticing works generally bear some highly gilded and esoteric name, such as the Anthropologica Publishing Company, or the Press of the Prancing Stag, and ordinarily are addressable at a P.O. box number in some place like Secaucus, N. J.

Now let us suppose that the Bishop, or the Chief Justice, or the surgeon, or some other "member of the learned professions" who has received one of these leaflets, is of so inflammable a masculine nature that the description of *Sex Life in Patagonia* does indeed enkindle him beyond endurance. Fired by the prospect of seeing photographs of little boys in the very act of

matricula rufigastra (or, it may be, of Patagonian young ladies shamelessly performing *protoplastria subjecta* right in front of Professor Piazza's Graflex), the eager fellow seizes a chance when his wife isn't looking and sends a letter and check to the Press of the Prancing Stag, ordering one copy of the anthropological masterwork sent to him at his office address. Having entered the expenditure of \$12.50 on his check-stub as "Cigars" or "Charity" or "Mission Fund", he settles down to days of burning waiting.

In due course, there arrives at his office a package from the Press. He notes, even before opening it, that it seems an extraordinarily small package. And indeed, when the great Continental anthropologist's work is finally divested of its wrappings, it turns out to be one of the smallest octavo volumes on record. The 400 pages also prove to be covered with some of the largest and widest-spaced type ever seen in book-making, so that the grand total of the reading matter in *Sex Life in Patagonia* might possibly occupy a very backward boy in the fourth grade for half an hour. But still the Learned Professional who has bought this masterpiece of inflation does not quite despair. Tremulously he turns to the photo-

graphs. Sure enough, here is a full-page picture in which, says the caption, a Patagonian young man is caught in the act of *matricula rufigastra*. And so he is, without a detail missing from the photograph. It is a splendid picture, and shows the adolescent Patagonian in the act of cooking his supper (or chopping down a tree, or combing his aged mother's hair, or whatever). In a fine frenzy, the burning bibliophile flips the pages furiously until he finds the candid-camera shot of the Patagonian lassies engaged in *protoplastria subjecta*; they turn out to be a sag-busted trio, occupied in playing the native Patagonian guitar, or *gukwok*, and grinning toothily.

By this time it should begin to dawn upon even the dimmest bibliophilic consciousness that all is not well. Sometimes, however, the Prancing Stag's customer will be so reluctant to admit despair that he will even turn back to the start of the book and begin reading Professor Piazza's text. If he persists he will find it a gentlemanly (if superficial and excessively brief) account of, oddly enough, the sex life of Patagonia, written in a genteel and cautious prose entirely suitable for consumption in convents and select female academies.

II

Now there is not, of course, anything new or revolutionary in this method of parting the populace from its money. Some of the country carnivals that visit the rural region in which I live still have "For Men Only" tents in which the goggling yokel, having obtained admittance for the trivial sum of a quarter, finds displayed a pair of suspenders. This amiable and possibly salutary fraud has been going on for centuries and is a surprise to no one, except of course the lusty cretins who are taken in. What *is* new and rather staggering, though, is the redressing of this venerable fraud — hitherto deemed suitable for working only on open-mouthed hayseeds and the mentally arrested — and its quick growth into what is now virtually a standard branch of the book business. A large section of the bookselling fraternity has suddenly struck pay dirt.

This new species of erotica (or, as the *bouquinistes* would have it, "Facetiae & Occult"), must not be confused with the good old-fashioned out-and-out smut, which has of course played a continuous part in publishing and bookselling almost ever since Herr Johannes Gutenberg hit upon his little invention. Dirty books, like "feelthy"

pictures and like the poor, have ever been with us and doubtless ever will be. But for the past five or six years, pornography — real straight-from-the-shoulder knock-'em-down lubricity — has been under a cloud. A few grubby little private presses, mostly in Harlem and Little Italy, still turn out ill-printed and misspelled brochures for the stevedore and truck-driver trade, but that is very nearly the whole extent of the current traffic in full-blooded erotica.

Instead the mails are clogged with this new kind of booksellers' pay dirt. With leer and nudge and wink, the trade is busily foisting upon the Serious Adult Anthropological Students of the land a tremendous tonnage of works which could not possibly cause even the most acutely satyriac reader a moment's tremor. By the tens of thousands the copies of *Tibetan Marriage Customs* roll from the presses (. . . "full morocco . . . actual photographs of Tibetan bridegrooms *impropria delicti habitans* . . . \$22.50 . . ."), and further tens of thousands of copies of *Arabian Love-Rites* and *Formosa Esoterica* and *The Libido in Liberia*. The services of the more exotically named Continental anthropologists are at a premium. Herr Professor Dampferschnutzel, who had been

slaving away for forty years in an obscure Bavarian high school, is now being stunned into joyous delirium by frantic bids from the Exotica Publishing Company (R.F.D. 1, Parsippany, N. J.) and the Press of the Rearing Stallion (Box 88, Hemlock Forks, Utah) for the American rights to his excruciatingly tiresome little monograph on the sexual customs of the Iranian peasantry.

There are many sad angles to this state of affairs. There is, for one thing, the plight of the orthodox booksellers, who never handled smut at all, but did do a large and respectable business in the scholarly and useful labors of Krafft-Ebing and Forel, and who are now having large chunks of their business bitten off by the Rearing Stallions and Panting Bulls whose presses are popping up like mushrooms. There is the plight of the out-and-out smut-mongers, a dreary but hard-working lot, whose

powerful literary aphrodisiacs lie unpurchased on their shelves while their erstwhile clientele rushes off to buy the guilefully-proffered innocuities of the Passion Publishing Company, Inc. There is the tragic dilemma of John S. Sumner, who no longer dares raid the firm that has sent out a leering prospectus of *The Secrets of the Yoshiwara*, for fear the book may turn out to be only a refurbished work of Louisa Alcott's. And — hardly least — there is the painful situation of the thousands of clergymen, educators, and other Adult Students whose simple faith in mankind is daily receiving fresh setbacks as they open furtively but with dwindling hopes their costly packages.

It is time to think wistfully of good John Cleland. John was that goaty old philologist and British consul who, in 1750, produced *The Memoirs of Fanny Hill*. I fancy he is now whirling in his grave.



WHY BECOME AN AMERICAN CITIZEN?

BY DON LAYNE

*More than seven million aliens now living in our midst
enjoy the same valued privileges as American citizens —
with the strange exception of bearing arms in time of war.*

FEW Americans appreciate the extent of their prodigious and lavish hospitality to foreigners—the fact that they are at present hosts to more strangers than there are soldiers in the combined standing armies of the world's ten leading nations. This amazing spirit of improvident and unreciprocated neighborliness is not to be found in any other spot on earth. There are more than 7,000,000 aliens living in the United States, of whom no less than 500,000 are in the country illegally. When we consider that almost 2,000,000 of these foreigners are busily engaged in farming, merchandising, or professional activities, and that a few are even knocking down weekly, four-figured, sunkist pay checks for mugging in public, we begin to comprehend what a splendid country America really is—for foreigners. This is even more apparent when we discover that almost

2,000,000 of our non-citizens are gainfully employed at an average wage exceeding \$100 per month, or \$2,100,000,000 per year; that nearly 1,500,000 are registered upon the Relief rolls at an annual expense of \$500,000,000; and that some 50,000 criminal aliens, through their fancy but nefarious arts, are costing the citizens another \$50,000,000.

This total of almost \$3,000,000,000 is indeed a neat little bill to pay for being a Good Neighbor—particularly when we recall that Bruno Richard Hauptmann was a criminal alien illegally residing within our boundaries, and that his trial in connection with the Lindbergh case cost the taxpayers over \$1,000,000; that Giuseppe Zangara, who attempted to assassinate President Roosevelt in 1933, was of the same category; that the incredible Charles Ponzi was an alien; and that a large number of our Communists and Radical agitators fall

into the same group, many of whom are living at the expense of the government they seek to destroy.

In contrast to the huge army of foreigners in this country, we note that there are only 409,306 Americans now living outside the borders of the United States. Further, such Americans, if in need of a livelihood, must submit to numerous official registrations; make detailed reports to the police of the country in which they are located; obtain hard-to-get work permits; and, in truth, are required to comply — together with their prospective employers — with so many restrictions that it is virtually impossible to remain gainfully employed. As for those in need — well, under no circumstances will a foreign country permit an American to receive Relief funds. Thus, many gringos find it expedient to become citizens of the country in which they seek employment.

In America, however, foreigners may, with the exception of voting or holding public office (and both have been done many times), enjoy any privilege, work at any trade, engage in any business, and follow any profession. In fact, the *status quo* of the alien is practically identical with that of the American. Hence it can readily be understood

why our non-citizens see no dire necessity for becoming citizens.

At various times various members of Congress have succeeded in working themselves into a lather over the Alien Situation: they have viewed with alarm the detrimental influences brought by foreigners to our economic, political, and social structures; they have howled that these aliens should be deported; they have shouted that Something Must Be Done. But nothing will ever be done — and for a very good reason. Congressmen are representatives of districts which are apportioned in ratio to the population *and not in ratio to the number of voters*: hence, it is entirely possible for a congressman to represent a district in which there is a population of some 250,000 aliens — but in which there are only a handful of legal voters. Consequently, a comprehensive program of deportation would obliterate some twenty or thirty congressional districts, a proportionate number of congressmen, at least twice as many secretaries, and also hundreds of minor lawgivers, ward-healers, and political parasites. We may therefore rest assured that any concrete movement to deport large groups of aliens will immediately meet with the severe disapproval of

those lawmakers hailing from sections of the country thickly inhabited by non-citizens.

Realizing that the yowling of our demagogues for mass deportation is just so much bombast, we naturally turn to the other side of the dilemma: Why don't our aliens become citizens? Well, let us investigate the current situation.

II

In order to become a citizen, aside from the fact that the alien must be of either the white or African race, eighteen years of age or more, and lawfully admitted into the Union for permanent residence, it is also necessary for him to fill out certain applications, produce signed photographs, appear before the clerk of court in whose jurisdiction he resides, and pay a sum of money that, in any case, does not exceed \$5. Upon satisfactory completion of the above ritual, the foreigner is given the Declaration of Intention (First Paper). Then, after an interval of at least two years and no more than seven, the alien can apply for the Petition for Citizenship (Second Paper), providing that certain minor qualifications have been met, including the producing of a small fee along with two citizen-witnesses who will testify

as to his good character, proper length of residence, etc. Ninety days later the court hearing takes place and the applicant is given the Certificate of Citizenship. The total governmental charges, including the head tax, \$8, the Certificate of Registry, \$10, and the cost of the *first* and *second* papers do not, in any instance, exceed \$30.

The above routine appears to be neither complicated nor costly. The ordinary foreigner, however, is compelled to forfeit valuable work-time waiting in courtrooms and, if he is the average case, he must locate and pay his witnesses. This payment — which is akin to a bribe — runs from \$10 to \$500 — the figure depending upon the greed of the witnesses and the wealth of the seeker-after-citizenship.

Before becoming a citizen, however, an alien will, in the interest of good sense, pause to contemplate just what American citizenship implies. Does it mean more privileges or freedom? Hardly. Of the various liberties enjoyed by Americans, non-citizens may enjoy almost all. They may own and drive cars, make soapbox harangues, and travel freely about the country. In all but five States, they may become trustees, executors, guardians, or administrators under a will. Every State permits foreigners to enjoy

the same privileges as Americans in respect to the buying or selling of guns. Everywhere, excepting in Oregon, they may ground-loop an airplane in your front yard; and only in Massachusetts is it *preferred* that the bidding on public contracts be done by Americans.

Does citizenship open up wider fields for chasing the elusive dollar? Well, out of nearly 1600 ways to earn a living open to all Americans, aliens are prohibited from engaging in only eighty-three. New York leads with thirty-one restrictions; Delaware, the District of Columbia, Florida, and Oklahoma have only two — and Missouri has none. The average runs about six. Alabama, for instance, although prohibiting foreigners from the practice of accountancy, law, and optometry, permits them to teach school (as do thirty-three other States), practice medicine, raise cotton, and handle dynamite. On the other hand there are six States in which aliens, as public accountants or lawyers, can help us chisel our income tax or, if we misbehave, defend us before a court of law. As for optometry, aliens may sell glasses to astigmatic citizens in all but five States.

It is entirely possible for the alien in America to be a successful manufacturer or contractor em-

ploying thousands of workers; he may become a lumber baron or even a banker; he may own vast tracts of land; he may control railroads, chain-stores, magazines, and mines; or he may become a newspaper publisher and attempt to propagandize the Republic — but Colorado prohibits him from being a court reporter; Oregon won't let him gather or sell oysters; Michigan refuses him the right to promote wrestling matches; and he can't sell steamship tickets in Pennsylvania, peddle bananas in New York, file a mining claim in Nevada, or harbor dogs in West Virginia. Such is the sagacity of our lawgivers.

Both Florida and Nebraska prohibit the non-citizen nurse from holding hands or taking temperatures, although the foreigner may practice medicine in twenty-seven other States, including Florida; while Nebraska, along with thirty-seven of her sister States, permits the alien pharmacist to sell drugs, golf sticks, postage stamps, and lamb fricassee. Only one State, New York, refuses to allow foreigners to practice dentistry — and only five States prohibit them from being cops. South Dakota bars the non-citizen from selling poison, but he may buy and sell it in every other State of the Union. Forty-five

States will permit the foreigner to work on civil service jobs; thirty-eight States allow him to be employed on public works; and every State grants him the right to own and operate restaurants, fruit stands, delicatessen stores, and pants-pressing emporiums.

Our aliens are also privileged to compete against the American farmer in producing major crops. California, for example, permits the foreigner to grow oranges or lettuce to his heart's content, but he isn't allowed to be a private detective; he may grow wheat in Kansas, but he can't be a shot-firer; he can raise corn and hogs in Iowa, but that State won't let him cut hair. The various legislators throughout the cotton and tobacco States of the South have collected their pay checks after enacting irrelevant and incongruous laws prohibiting aliens from becoming junk dealers in Virginia, directors of insurance companies in Louisiana, employees on public works in Alabama, fire chiefs in Arkansas, architects in Georgia, hoisting engineers in North Carolina, and pool-room owners in South Carolina — but not one law was passed that prohibited foreigners from raising the crops so important to such political districts.

In the great cattle States of the

West, an alien may possess 10,000 head of beef or sheep, own choice grazing lands, and control a chain of dude ranches — but he isn't permitted to be a chiropodist in New Mexico, an auctioneer in Montana, a mine foreman in Wyoming, a State police officer in Texas, or a cosmetologist in Idaho. Non-citizens may work in steel mills, automobile plants, tire factories, railroad shops, and research laboratories — but Pennsylvania won't let them handle liquor; Ohio prohibits them from selling life insurance; Michigan refuses them the right to promote prizefights; and Connecticut does not allow them to go lobster fishing. Foreigners may sneak across the borders into the Republic, go anywhere, and proceed to earn American dollars as asphalt workers, authors, boiler makers, bricklayers, butchers, carpenters, farm workers, longshoremen, radio announcers — but why go on? No wonder the total of aliens in America exceeds the combined populations of fifteen States!

Not only do foreigners enjoy an extraordinary amount of freedom in the United States — but the Department of Labor, their own embassies, the State Department, and congressmen defend them and look after their welfare. Non-citizens are eligible to receive FHA

aid, Social Security benefits, PWA and WPA work, and they can borrow money from the HOLC. Some of them have even held executive positions with various New Deal agencies. They are permitted to join trade unions (fourteen per cent of the total American membership is alien), build homes, make contracts, use courts of law, obtain credit, and send their chil-

dren to public schools. In truth, the aliens have all the privileges of genuine Americans except that they *do not have to go to war*.

So, unless an alien should happen to want to be a boat-puller in Oregon, a taxidermist in Maine, or a dog-owner in West Virginia, why, in the name of common sense, should he ever become a citizen?



OF MORTAL MEMORY

BY MARION DOYLE

MY LITTLE memory is so short that I
Must mourn anew, at each recurring Autumn
The last gold leaf against a pewter sky,
The frosted rose, and to the very bottom
Of my being, shiver at the sight
Of migrant song writ on the southward air —
The score of Summer vanishing in flight
Before the White Beast's stirring in his lair.

Why do I not recall the genuflection
Of that strange beast to April, virgin-white;
The miracle of lost leaves' resurrection
In emerald flame drawn up through honeyed light?

Too many echoes of ancestral fears
Beat, like the pulse of God, against my ears;
And I, alas, but mortal, read the doom
Of earth, and all the issue of her womb.

THE GAME COCK

BY HOWARD POWEL

Cock fighting is a universal sport with more followers in this country than is generally suspected. The principal American stake is conducted each year for an \$8000 prize.

A FIGHTING cock's gameness—that savage exaltation which seizes him during the throes of battle—is unearthly and awe-inspiring. In the cocker's vocabulary the word *game* has a special significance which indicates far more than mere courage or bravery: to be game, the broken-legged must hobble at the enemy; the broken-backed must writhe and peck at an adversary; the blinded must listen for the breathing of his antagonist and attack the sound; the hopelessly wounded may never surrender but must strike with bloody head at death itself. True gameness is tempered by nothing; the lost cause is never abandoned.

Such magnificent fortitude cannot be acquired. Inherited, it occurs only in the purely bred game fowl. To a breeder of games, all other chickens, no matter how impressive their pedigrees, are *dung-hills*. They may not interbreed

with fighting cocks in the slightest degree, for one drop of such craven blood is ruinous. A *dunkie* may fight desperately under certain conditions, but he cannot stand the gaff. He will peck and bludgeon manfully in a barn-lot melee; but, once he feels those needles of steel which are affixed to a bird's legs before he enters the fighting pit, the dunghill will squawk and run. The game, on the other hand, is only more anxious to continue the engagement when he feels the sting of the gaff. He doesn't know the meaning of the word compromise: fighting is so sweet that death is not too high a price to pay for its indulgence.

Philosophers and psychologists proclaim that self-preservation and procreation are the strongest instincts in living beings. But the cock pays no attention to such trite generalities and proceeds to subordinate both safety and love-making

to his fighting instinct. Even when starved to the point of death, then tossed with another of his ilk into a pit strewn with corn, he will rush to battle, the food ignored until he or the stranger is dead. As for procreation, the most seductive hen rates not a second glance when another cock is in the offing. This feathered Samurai does not limit warfare to the Spring when sleek young pullets are most entrancing; he fights for the love of combat whenever the opportunity presents itself. Once hurt he will use his dying gasp, his last lungful of oxygen, to strike at an opponent.

Cocks are bred for two things, gameness and what the cocker calls cutting ability — that indefinable something which distinguishes the champion from the second-rater. The ability to cut is really the knack of handling the gaffs superlatively, of pointing the heels perfectly. The cutter makes every thrust count, and, like the boxer with the knockout punch, is dangerous as long as he is conscious. It sometimes happens that during the early stages of a match, a cock will swarm all over his adversary, apparently delivering several blows for each one received. His activities, however, do not accomplish much. Gradually his springs into the air become less frequent, his

rushes weaken, until at last his adversary, coolly waiting for all this fury to abate, steps in and cuts him down with a few accomplished thrusts. Like gameness, the art of cutting cannot be taught or acquired; born without it, a bird will never learn the knack.

The manner in which a bird manipulates his legs during a fight is a mystery. So far, high-speed photographs cannot be taken fast enough to show how a cock strikes. Every cocker has a pet theory, but the fowl's legs move too swiftly for the human eye. No matter how closely you may watch, the actual act of striking eludes you and the blows register only as sounds which come with the rapidity of the snare drum's roll. There is an incredible force behind these blows. When the walls of the pit are of wood, a bird missing his opponent sometimes nails himself to the barrier and is left hanging by his gaff. It has been estimated that an ordinary man would have to strike with full power to produce the same effect as that delivered by the game. It is also difficult to understand how two birds can deliver crushing blows with a gaff which points toward their tails as they face each other.

Like gameness and cutting power, pugnacity is a matter of in-

heritance. Perhaps it is influenced by sexual development, although it makes its appearance before sexual characteristics are in evidence. Generally when chicks are six to eight weeks old and still running with the hen, the males will set about determining who is to be cock of the walk. The hen realizes instinctively that the chicks will not seriously damage themselves, and rarely interferes. Usually the youngsters pair off, but at times the affair turns into a battle royal with half a dozen miniature warriors pecking valiantly at every head within range. When night falls they will huddle together, heads under each other's wings, continuing hostilities the next morning.

For some days the brood presents a woeful appearance, eyes swelled shut and feathers picked from tiny necks and heads. Yet when the final decisions are reached, each chick knows exactly which brother he may bulldoze and which is his master. This relationship endures until the stags start in pursuit of the fair sex; then the merciless fighting instinct reaches its full development and the males must be isolated, or some morning the yard will have become an abattoir with the whole male population bloody and dying.

II

Gaffs (cockers call them *heels*) are the fowl's weapons. They vary in length from one and a quarter to three inches, and once the battle starts, they may not be replaced. The gaff is an extremely simple but nonetheless murderous instrument comprised of a bit of steel and an oblong strip of leather. A curved spine called a blade protrudes from a round socket which is stitched into the leather. A pair of heels costs from five to twenty-five dollars. Those made by some of the famous old-time craftsmen are much sought after, commanding a considerable premium today.

Heeling the cock is a fine art. Gaffs must be fastened firmly, but at the same time the binding must not impede circulation or interfere with the free movement of the bird's legs. An expert heeler, like the high priest at some pagan rite, gently massages a foot and flexes a leg to learn where the muscle bulge comes when the bird is in action. Next he saws off the natural spur, leaving a quarter-inch stub which he covers with chamois packing and fits into the gaff socket. The leather is wrapped around the leg, tied with waxed cord, and the heeling is complete. In Northern countries a smooth-

pointed gaff is used and both legs of a cock are heeled. In the tropics, razor-edged gaffs called slashers are much used and only the left leg is armed.

The cockpit is a circular expanse of swept clay some twenty feet in diameter, enclosed by a low barrier and surrounded by tiers of benches. A popular pit in a cocking center may be housed in an elaborate, hundred-thousand-dollar stadium, while in the hinterlands the fenced-off corner of a dilapidated barn may serve. The surroundings are of no concern to the performers. They battle just as desperately in John Doe's barn as in the most ornate metropolitan arena.

Beside the cocks and the referee, two handlers are in the pit while a battle is in progress. Like a boxer's second, the handler administers first aid to his champion between pittings. His job is all-important, but it is not for those squeamish souls who sicken at the sight of gore. When the bird becomes hung by a gaff which its owner is unable to withdraw, the handlers pull the steel from the wound. Sometimes, by biting its comb, the handler restores a crazed cock to its senses; and when the windpipe of a lung-gaffed chicken fills with blood, the handler, putting his lips to the

fowl's beak, sucks out the strangling claret.

As a match begins, the handlers, cocks on their arms, advance to the center of the arena and allow the birds to peck at each other until aroused. The onlookers appraise the fowl and make their wagers. The antagonists having been formally introduced, the handlers retire to opposite sides of the pit. A hush falls on the assemblage. The referee in a warning voice calls . . . "Get ready, Gentlemen!" The handlers set their straining champions on the clay floor. . . . Then the command, "Pit your cocks!" And the released furies rush together, meeting in the center of the ring with whirring wings and flashing heels. Breast to breast they spring from the ground, a shifting, blurring kaleidoscope of death. A muffled, staccato drumming fills the air. With lightning speed blows are struck and parried. Suddenly, the crowd gives a gasp. With a thump the adversaries fall to earth, a gaff driven far into the brain of one gallant warrior, the victor held prisoner by the steel he has sped so strongly. The handlers swoop on the birds; the victorious heel is withdrawn. The winner, returned to his coop, explains to his neighbors just how it all happened. And the crowd settles its bets.

THE GAME COCK

III

The origin of the game bird is hidden in the vagueness of prehistoric time. But for as long as man has recorded his doings, he has cherished fighting chickens. From the very earliest times the cock has been found in India, Java, China, Japan, the Philippines, Mexico, Peru, and the South Sea Islands.

Twelve centuries before Christ, cockfighting is spoken of as a sport. Aristophanes calls the cock the Persian bird, for Persian soldiers, celebrated everywhere for the excellence of their fighting fowl, are credited with the introduction of the sport to the Greeks, who in turn instructed the Romans. When Julius Caesar visited Britain he commented on the abundance of native fowl "which were used only for the purpose of pastime and pleasure". The Athenian Spectaculum was a public show, lasting one day, at which cocks were fought and which young men were obliged to attend. Chivalry and chicken fighting flowered side by side in medieval England. The stag was dubbed before entering the pit, while the gallant squire was dubbed a knight and given silver spurs before he became a full-fledged warrior.

Game fowl were highly re-

spected in Colonial America. Benjamin Franklin favored the cock rather than the "somewhat cowardly eagle" as our national bird. When stress of fathering a country permitted, George Washington was a constant attendant at the pit.

Pugnacious Andrew Jackson bred his own fowl which were noted for their excellence. A cock which fights ferociously after being blinded is still called a *Jackson*.

Cockfighting is today a universal sport, if any can be so termed. In every land and climate, with the exception of the polar regions, the pastime claims its followers. It is the sport of the masses in every Spanish-speaking country. France's national emblem is the cock; the greatest pit in the world is in Southern France. The largest and perhaps the best cocks come from northern France and Belgium. Eighteen or twenty pounds is no uncommon weight.

Most Americans suppose that cockfighting is an anachronism surviving only in semi-civilized countries and that in the United States it is practically extinct. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Of course evidences of its existence are not placarded on billboards, for it is illegal. Participants, if caught, may be fined and their fowl confiscated. In those States where no

specific law prohibits, the affair may be stopped by invocation of the statutes against cruelty to animals, so cockers try to prevent knowledge of their doings from reaching the ears of unsympathetic friends. This is almost impossible in the case of a large tournament, so that important cocking events are seldom attempted if the law enforcement officials are hostile.

Cockfights fall into three classifications, *hacks*, *mains*, and *tournaments*. Any single match not a part of a tournament or a main is a hack. A series of battles between two owners for a definite stake is a main. In tournaments a number of owners pay a fee and enter a number of cocks of varying weights; each owner fights at least once with every other entry. The Orlando Tournament, outstanding American cocking event, attracts breeders and spectators from Canada, Mexico, and the United States. In normal years the entry fee is \$1000, only sixteen entries are accepted, and first money is \$8000. The Depression cut the fees and purses in half, but Orlando's prestige remains undimmed.

The United States boasts four magazines devoted entirely to game fowl, *Grit and Steel*, *Feathered Warrior*, *The Gamecock*,

and *Game Fowl News*. *Grit and Steel* lays claim to the "largest circulation of any U. S. publication devoted entirely to poultry". These periodicals are filled with accounts of mains and tournaments held throughout the country and devote much advertising space to descriptions of chickens bearing such terrifying names as Berserkers, Warhorses, Strychnine Blues, and Mugwumps. Such appellations mean nothing and are merely to impress prospective buyers. But there is always a brisk demand for breeding stock of the current Orlando Tournament winner.

Present strains of great popularity are: Whitehackles, which for years have been favorites for short heel fighting in Eastern States; Fullerton Jungle-Shawls and White-tailed Blues (Canadian strains, imported by Alfred G. Vanderbilt for an important main in 1935); and various lines of Grays, which, at their best, are hard to beat. Other well-known strains include Roundheads, Shufflers, Muffs, Tassels, Arkansas Travelers, Shawlnecks, Pyles, Claibornes, Gulls, Japs, Aseels, Redquills, Blackhackles, Spangles, and Hennies.

High-class breeding stock is never cheap. Sometimes it is unobtainable, since many breeders re-

fuse to part with their blood for any monetary consideration. The cocker who firmly believes he has a superior fowl usually prefers to bet on his warriors rather than sell them to someone who may oppose him in the pit. Fancy prices have been obtained for select breeding stock. Lord Clonmell paid \$1000 for a trio (cock and two hens) of the famous Kearney-Duryea Whitehackles. This strain, probably the greatest ever produced in the United States, was developed by Herman Duryea, Harry Paine Whitney's racing partner. Handled by Michael Kearney, the Whitehackles lost but one main during some thirty years.

Cockfighting has been outlawed as a cruel and brutalizing sport. The S. P. C. A. insists it is a blot on civilization's fair escutcheon, and few are brave enough to disagree publicly. Yet a cockfight is cruel only in a purely impersonal way. A game rooster rushes to the fray with all the enthusiasm of a bride

approaching the altar, and one of the cocker's biggest tasks is to prevent the bird from killing himself in an informal brawl before he reaches the pit. Contrary to general belief a cock does not suffer greatly during a fight. He has not the highly developed nervous system of the horse or dog, and his capacity for feeling pain is not great. In the heat of battle he appears quite insensible to any hurt. And before shedding too many tears on the subject of cruelty, consider the primrose path the ordinary rooster travels. About the time a stag is being conditioned for his maiden encounter, the dunghill, in anticipation of his owner's Sunday dinner, will have his neck wrung in a most inglorious manner. Why is it more cruel to give an animal a fighting chance for his life in the cockpit than to wring his neck and eat him? I only know that if ever I am reincarnated as a chicken, I pray whatever avian Gods there be to make me a game rooster.



READING, 'RITING, AND REVOLUTION

BY DIXON WECTER

A practicing university professor fails to find trace of the Young Rebels who are supposedly erecting their intellectual barricades in America's distinguished Halls of Learning.

EVERY day in the round of a teacher's duties I make a few soundings into the minds of a hundred or more undergraduates in a large State university. One is not disturbed occasionally to find the shallows of provincial prejudice, or even the sediment of rather cloudy thinking—for these waters, like the Pool of Bethesda, may be better for a little troubling, by professors or some other ministers of grace. More depressing is the calm monotony of these currents, flowing with soporific murmurs to the sea—with few of the sharp erosions, the boiling vortices, the headlong cascades that a young river should possess. Is it possible that the Revolt of Youth, like Niagara, has been harnessed? Certainly the gravest fault one can find today with the brightest undergraduates is very different from the charge leveled by deans and parents and clergy in the Jazz Age, when (as Scott Fitz-

gerald assured us) the American campus was strewn with gin bottles as thickly as dandelions.

To pat the new collegians on the back has lately grown almost as popular as was the practice, fifteen years ago, of damning their elder brothers. In recent analyses, Dean Gauss of Princeton has declared that beyond question Youth is moving rapidly toward new standards of wisdom and sobriety, and not long ago President Walter A. Jessup of the Carnegie Foundation, in discussing "The Challenge of the New Student" in his annual report, observed:

The student on the campus is no longer the blasé sophisticate, but a hard-working, serious-minded person who demands more of the college library, the laboratory, and the instructor than did his brother of a decade ago. He is increasingly a patron of the seminar, the serious lecture, the art gallery, the symphony concert. This student is deflating the "rah-rah boy" of yesterday. He has a different

attitude toward scholarship, research, athletics, fraternities, and student activities. It can almost be said that the present college student is the person that the college professor was asking for a decade ago.

We would indeed like to believe these tidings, yet a realist cannot escape his private doubts. One suspects that undergraduates in the mass today are not essentially different from those of the last decade, though they have less spending-money. The excesses of the Jazz Age were the doings of a gaudy minority, exploited on the one hand by sophomoric writers who loved to shock, and on the other by preachers—ordained or otherwise—who had missed the luxury of moral indignation since the defeat of the Hun. The present writer, who was a student during that decade first at a Southern university and then at Yale, does not turn to *This Side of Paradise* for his memoirs of bright college years.

Average American undergraduates are now, as they always have been, a decent, healthy, athletic sort, liking the simpler pleasures and shirking the intellectual arduous. The usual amount of drinking is now less sensational because it is legal and because fewer people die of it. The right of women to smoke has won moral recognition largely on account of the advertis-

ing campaigns of cigarette-makers, and every sorority house now has its smoking lounge. Petting—once widely publicized upon the discovery of a new word for an old custom—is timelessly popular. But these undergraduates, though likable, are not very remarkable in any way; their philosophy of living is and always will be a comfortable compliance. Obviously, then, it is the small band of students with exceptional brains and mature purpose, sobered by the Depression, whom the idealists have in mind when they write glowingly of the New Undergraduate.

Yet there are times when one feels ungraciously inclined to grumble to Heaven after taking inventory of his blessings. We are told that the new student—keenly engrossed in reading, studying, and thinking about our economic and political impasse—is about to revolutionize this old creaking fabric of society, in which his fathers have dwelt as in a doomed house. But how true is the promise?

II

Last night I went to a meeting of a club of our most intelligent young men which is called the Oxford Society—organized some years ago by an Anglophile in imitation

of those famous port-and-coffee discussion groups found in every Oxford and Cambridge college. I sat in very pleasant company, smoking a pipe and hearing a fledgling Phi Beta Kappa read a paper in which he told his fellows that "it is our duty to strive for culture". Culture, I gathered, was something like a forward pass, grimly to be intercepted by all alert youngsters. The speaker had some very able and intelligent things to say about art and modern society, revealing a mind as keen and a scholarship as intensive as had created the papers we used to hear at the Bodley Club at Oxford; one might be carping to note the absence of a certain underlying comment of rich and robust individualism. His viewpoint in general was approved and progressive: he was aware of that social purpose which justifies the claim of literature, painting, and music upon the time of the economic man; his interpretation of history was that which is impressively called the Hegelian dialectic; he was well informed about the achievements of modern science, which, except for flaws in the system of distribution, might have brought so much happiness into the world. Between Republican materialism, which posits two cars in every garage as the goal of

felicity, and the Marxian brand, which allures with free tickets on the *charabanc*, I assume that he favored the latter, perhaps as a matter of taste.

In many ways a paragon of sober industry, this undergraduate is by no means unique; in the discussion which followed his paper I learned that there were a dozen more as well-read and earnest as he in the same room, though some were as firmly entrenched on the leeward side of the barricades. But whatever their loyalties might be, many of them showed a congruity of mind and a thinness of the personal pattern which I found a little disheartening.

That the conservatives are in the main stereotyped needs perhaps small proof. Usually children of well-to-do families, they have caught the panicky feeling of their elders lest confiscatory taxes or even more violent means rob them of financial security. Their thoughts about the state of the nation are often naïve attempts to rationalize an instinctive alarm which knows no broad and unselfish purpose. That social justice might also be evoked in the attempt to conserve the best of our American tradition, seems rarely to occur to them. On the other hand, it is less often noticed that the so-

called Liberals — parlor and campus Radicals — have grown equally standardized. Echoes of catch-phrases, arguments out of the last book read, the opinions of some magnetic speaker or friend, and a vague personal grievance against people with superior advantages — these are the usual grounds of conviction. Just now the well-dressed mind is wearing a dash of pink, and so one speaks airily about “the outworn capitalist system”, learnedly postulates “a planned economy”, and of course describes the bogey of Fascism as “the last stand of Capitalism”.

Our tabloid press is alarmed because, as it supposes, the three R's have lately become Reading, 'Riting, and Revolution; and many worthy but nervous people are invoking teachers' oath laws and other shackles upon academic freedom. But the real trouble with our schools and universities is much deeper, in fact quite beyond the reach of any legislative probe: it is the rapidly increasing attitude of national and personal submission to the hypnotic word, whether it be the shrill cry of the alarmist or the bland accents of the equally professional Liberal. Reactionaries and Radicals alike seem to assume without question that the real purpose of the newspaper, the pulpit,

and the teacher's desk is not the calm search for truth, but indoctrination.

It may be fantastic to suggest that, in the material environment of our lives, collegiate and non-collegiate, we are already ripe for regimentation — living under some kind of benign dictatorship from the time we are roused by an alarm-clock to perform our daily dozen under the command of brisk impersonality, until at night we obediently brush our teeth with a certified dentrifice and sink into oblivion on a five-ply mattress. Yet, bombarded by the same daily and hourly stimuli of opinion and propaganda, through syndicated newspapers, movies, and radio, we have insensibly become the victims of the Loudest Voice — whether it issues from Dr. Roosevelt, Mr. Hearst, the American Legion, or some other self-commissioned captain of our souls.

For all the hopeful forecasts showered upon it, I regretfully see no reason to believe that the present college generation in America shows a special genius for cool, independent, detached thinking. Having grown up under the increasing conformity and suggestibility of American life, it is about as responsive as the rest of our population to magnetism and conven-

tion, phantom-phrases and shibboleths. Among the great majority, being conspicuous in dress, manner, or thought is the deadliest of sins; uniformity is the label of merit at Princeton and Yale as well as in the West, and it is the password to all clubs and fraternities. Among the intellectual minority — traditionally our rebels and Ishmaels — more attention, to be sure, is often paid to social and political controversy, which has succeeded to the arena once held by religion *vs.* science; but what frequently appears to be serious thought is the echo of the doctrinaire, or else the self-hypnosis of jargon.

Furthermore, both conservatives and Radicals among the ranks of American college youth show a common disinclination to do anything but talk. Here at the essay society, for example, I saw an able senior, son of a prosperous family and educated at St. Mark's, who believes passionately in the traditional order and the philosophy of individualism; he is going into mining engineering, and never for a moment thinks of giving his life disinterestedly to the cause of conservatism, in the manner of Burke and Gladstone, or dozens of Oxford Union debaters today who look forward to entering Parlia-

ment or some other career of public service on behalf of their convictions. On the other hand, that youth beside him, with an equally firm belief that happiness for all lies in government ownership of the means of production — is he planning to tramp the country throwing pamphlets into the carriages of the rich as did Percy Shelley, or to help form political juntas and if need be go to jail as do the smoldering undergraduates of Latin universities? Definitely, no; he is going to teach literature in a high school, and lecture on humanitarianism in the novels of Dickens.

III

This growing uniformity of the American mold, together with its lack of resilient protest or even of a rich individuality, is Youth's most serious handicap, with which our hopeful prophets have not reckoned. Vulnerability to suggestion and mental coercion — which is becoming almost a national disease — seems in part to result from the absence of a racial quality which corresponds to body in wine. Our great country, with all its contours and weathers, its heady mixtures of blood, and its still hidden lodes of folklore, tradition, and inarticulate poetry, seems yet to want enough

vital personality to go around for one hundred and thirty million people, so that it is buttered everywhere a trifle hungrily. The difference is readily seen if one compares half a dozen American businessmen in a Pullman smoker with a handful of crusty Highlanders in a Scotch pub, or a little knot of Irishmen at a horse race in County Clare, or a group of French politicians on the steps of the Chamber of Deputies. The identity of a Scotchman, an Irishman, or a Frenchman is built up by an age-old accretion of humors and idiosyncrasies; while the identity of an American—at least since the heyday of the Melting Pot in the later nineteenth century—has been reached by a process of subtraction and dilution. The marks of conformity are the visible papers of his citizenship. American life is as intelligent, educated, and wide-awake as any in the world, but its distinguishing quality is its peculiar thinness. Its mental fare is a sort of cafeteria diet, rich with vitamins but quite innocent of epicurism. The parasite of digests and school-texts and newspapers, it roots in homes where there is a good radio but no violin, a book-of-the-month but no library.

With all our passion for literacy and for making and listening to

speeches, we have no feeling for the old and purely personal arts of expression like letter-writing and conversation. The savor, the freedom, the wayward graces, and eccentric humor of living have pretty well evaporated since the days of "local color"; they linger only among such small, quaint remnants of the unassimilated as the hill-billy and the Charleston Negro which are now the materials of our art and poetry. The twentieth century has been sterile in new traditions and idioms, unless one excepts the gangster—the negation of all humanity. This spiritual anemia—a vastly more serious symptom than the bumptiousness of Americans, about which we used to hear so much prior to the Depression—greatly impoverishes social life in the United States, and is not without graver dangers: it is one of the prime reasons why we are swayed, like a field of ripe corn, by the breath of the passing demagogue. The stalk has no real toughness of fiber.

Knowing that dissent and free controversy are our American methods of getting at truth, Thoreau wrote in his *Journal*: "What does education often do? It makes a straight-cut ditch of a free, meandering brook." The tendency which Thoreau hated has now be-

come greatly aggravated, thanks to several powerful and obscurely related causes. The most obvious is our industrial science, which has filled the land with commodities from whose manufacture the human element — the pride as well as the fallibility of the artisan — has been carefully extracted; its implications — that a human being is nothing but a maker of tools, and that standardization is the guarantee of all excellence — have not been lost on the American psychology. A notorious instance is the way in which many universities have prided themselves upon aping the size, efficiency, and administrative rigmarole of a great factory, ceaselessly expanding and turning the young mind upon the lathe of collegiate conformity. A similar heresy borrowed from industry is the idea that we can bring forth a great art and literature in the United States if we but devote sufficient capital to prizes and endowments.

But the roots of American conformity probably go back to a stratum older than the Machine Age, to the beginnings of our emigrant culture in the West. The urge of insular American life — misunderstood by Europeans in terms of dollar-chasing — is best described

as an attempt to keep abreast of the wagon-train, a childish love of company and imitation, and a real dread of solitude either physical or spiritual, of being left behind. The true aristocrat, with the backlog of centuries of assurance, behaves and thinks pretty much as he pleases, inviting the world to go to hell. But with us Americans — and it is well to remember that our nation, rich and poor, has been recruited exclusively from the middle and lower classes — a social and intellectual timidity began to show itself as soon as we felt any hankering after the arts and graces.

So far, the American aspiration has been directed toward standards of respectability, or *savoir faire*, or (as among recent college generations) the magic of sophistication, rather than the enrichment of personality. Moreover, the families which begot our present undergraduates were conditioned by the greatest of all materialistic eras, the 1920's. Building an empire has drained the elder American of that color, ripeness, playfulness, and imagination as necessary for the creation of personality as for the creation of art; he has exhausted his fantasy by expressing it in steel and stone, and his college children inherit the bankruptcy.

OLD-FASHIONED SOCIAL SECURITY

BY DELLA T. LUTES

A portrait of the land's simplicity — for those who can remember days that were unhurried, and for those younger people who also dislike the artificial complexities of today.

WHEN I was a little girl in Southern Michigan, we could always count on a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Calhoun at butchering time — for the “full pork barrel” had not yet ceased to be the farmer’s stand-by, and Mr. Calhoun, though he had sold his farm and moved to town, still thought he must “put down” half a hog.

In those days, the pork barrel was a symbol of plenty, occupying a position of dignified responsibility in family life. After butchering, the spare-ribs appeared in the menu first, for they required no treatment other than cooking. And modern cookery has no dish to match baked spare-ribs, as they emerged from my mother’s black, bandy-legged, wood-burning “elevated” stove. Hams and shoulders were put in brine, then hung in the smokehouse to ripen under the fragrant influence of hickory sticks

and corn cobs. Feet and hocks were made into souse and packed, firm in their own excellently flavored jelly, in small crocks. “Souse,” our hired man once remarked, “is the only good reason for a hawg’s havin’ four feet.”

Pork not needed for family use was hauled to market and sold. A load of hogs, pink-skinned and frozen stiff, piled high on a wagon or sleigh, was a common sight in the crisp days of late Fall and early Winter. This afforded the ready money of which the farmer had so little, and which, in fact, he little needed. His barns and storerooms were well stocked. He owned his house, and considered a mortgage a disgrace. When he needed fuel, he went out and cut it, and if he lacked indoor sanitation he never missed it. He did not expect to make a fortune, but he did intend to live in reasonable comfort until he died, with a respectable funeral

to follow. A not ambitious program, according to modern ideas of living, but one which tended toward a serene passing of his days and a dignified exit.

Since moving to town, Mr. Calhoun had missed that kind of life, and had often come to unburden himself to my father. I will never forget his simple eloquence on one occasion. It seems to me now that what he expressed then was more than a personal sadness. It was the reflected sadness of all those who had lost, in an era of synthetic, mechanized living, the peace that comes of living on and by the land; of those who had somehow overlooked the fact that the human race grew up close to the soil and is not yet entirely at peace very far away from it.

My father, I remember, was whittling a stick. Mr. Calhoun held an old broom handle in his hands and dug the earth with it. "Why, Thompson," he said, "my father bought that land from the Government, back in 1840. Paid a dollar and a quarter an acre. I was *born* there. Grew up on it—seven of us. Five girls. My father and mother worked hard to make that home. Lived in a log cabin, wolves howlin' nights, Indians prowlin' 'round all hours. But they stuck to it—cut timber, planted wheat and

orchards, built a big house—and had good times doin' it.

"Girls got married—I bought 'em out. Then *we* had five children, Ma'n me. Never had but one thought in the world—to give 'em all a good home. Why, Thompson, many's the year we've harvested two thousand bushel of corn off that land. Thrashed wheat with hoss-power first, then a little steam engine that burnt wood. Plenty to eat. Kep' warm. Went to meetin', had prayers to home. Knelt down and thanked God for helpin' us to make such a home."

My father continued to whittle his stick, his eyes cast down.

"But it wasn't enough, I guess," continued Mr. Calhoun. "When our boys grewed up, they had to go to town. Got to have *salaries*, 'stead of wages. Didn't figure on what it'd cost 'em to *live* on them salaries. Reg'lar hours was one of the argyments. What'd it get 'em, I'd like to know, to quit at five o'clock with no place to go and nothin' to do worth doin'?' No lake to go swimmin' or fishin' in, no rabbit huntin' in Fall."

"Tom don't say much," he went on. "He's the oldest one—in Detroit. And I don't know whuther he wishes he's back on the farm or not. But he's lost his job and Winter's comin' on. He says things are

pickin' up, but I hear there's still a good many men out of work in Detroit — Chicago too, where my other boy is. And they got rent to pay, both of 'em. *Rent!*" He spat the despised word. "Payin' *rent* when here he'd a had a home as long's he lived, and his children too. *Coal* to buy! And forty acre of good wood here to cut. And buyin' milk — quart to a time!"

For the hopeless scorn in his voice my father had no reply. He picked up another stick and whittled it into strips.

"Somewhere we've missed bringin' 'em up right. We ain't made 'em realize what it means to have *land*, land that can't slide out from under you first time hard times comes along. What it means to be your own boss and scared of nobody. I never should've sold the farm. But I thought if they're goin' to have things so easy for their wives, Ma oughtn't to have less."

"She like it?" asked my father.

"She never let on once. . . ." Mr. Calhoun got up, pulled his coat up over his gaunt shoulders, and settled his hat on his white head. ". . . Till last night. I says somethin' to her about havin' as much fruit on the shelves as she ever did on the farm and I asked her why she wanted to do so much when

she didn't hev to. She said she'd rather put up fruit than set in the front room lookin' out the window at a passel of discontented folks traipsin' by. And she —"

He took a turn down the yard, then came back with lowering brow. "She cried!" said Mr. Calhoun miserably. "Said she never wanted to leave the farm. Said she done it because she thought I oughtn't to keep on without the boys."

Mrs. Calhoun came to the door then, and said it was about time they were getting home. They still kept a cow, as so many farmers did when they first left their farms, and they had chores to do. The men started off to get the horse. They filled the buggy with Hubbard squash, apples, a pumpkin, and a piece of fresh pork. My father would deliver the half-hog later. They shook hands, and Mr. and Mrs. Calhoun drove away.

My father took the milk pails off the shelf, and my mother came out to get some wood. "Let it be," said my father, and his voice was very gentle. "I'll fill the wood box soon's I get through milkin'." He stopped and looked back at her. He wanted to say something more, but words come hard to country folks. The growing dark helped him.

"We ain't got so very much,

'Miry," he said huskily, "but what we've got's our own."

My mother gathered up an apron full of chips and straightened.

"We got enough," she said. "When I get my cupboards full of preserves and the bin full of potatoes and apples, and the pork barrel's full, I know nothin' very bad can happen to us."

And in that sentence she summed up Social Security as it

was known in the old days. Of course, Mother's homely principles could never solve the problems of present-day life; the world we live in today is far too complex for that. But it is a comforting thought that the really basic principles of living are the same now as they were then; and that the earth, at least, is still there, and will always be there for those who can find their way back to it.



GLASS AND PORCELAIN

BY MARYA ZATURENSKA

NOT with the naked eye I penetrate
This living world where glassy figures move
In some trans-lunar love
Defying that mad city where they rove,
Impervious to death, sorrow, and hate.

Those limbs of glass, those hearts cut crystal-deep,
Wild eyes of reverie look long till you discover
The secret that conceals each fragile lover

And warms the darkness with a silent cover,
Deeper than pain, deeper than endless sleep.

Under the cloud's white traffic, pale with bliss
Explore the initiate multitude and find
The beautiful less lovely than the kind,
The blood's rapture keener than the mind,
The cherished glance more haunted than the kiss.

DEAR MR. FLESSHEIMER

A Story

BY WHITFIELD COOK

DEAR MR. FLESSHEIMER,

It seems funny, me writing to you this way. And I honestly don't know how to begin. You don't know me. I'm the husband of Peggy Buell that works in your display department. She's really Mrs. Dave Goggins, only she thinks it's better for a girl in business to use her unmarried name. I don't know whether you even knew she was married. But I guess you did. I guess you know a lot about her, Mr. Flessheimer. You see, I've been hearing things.

I'm not one to believe in gossip. But certain information has come to me which I cannot close my eyes to. And then Peggy has finally said, yes, it's the truth. At first she said, no, no, it's all a lie, it's just those jealous little bitches in the office telling lies about me. But now she says, yes, it's the truth, so what? And I don't know so what. So that's why I'm writing to you, Mr. Flessheimer. I'm not blaming you, you understand. I know these sort

of things just happen sometimes. And with a high-spirited girl like Peggy, it would especially happen.

I put myself in your shoes, and I can see that it was all as natural as falling off a log. You saw Peggy when she was a stenographer in your office. And you noticed that she had beautiful hair like gold and a good figure. You can't help noticing those things with Peggy. And naturally you thought, this would be a good girl to have model our corsets and those new Smoothie Brassieres we're putting out. Well, I can understand that, Mr. Flessheimer. It was just good business. And then when you talked to Peggy about it, she was only too delighted, because it meant a raise and because she always hated pounding a typewriter anyway. At the end of a day her hands would hurt. When we were first married, I'd always kiss each of her fingers when she came home from work. That was only when we were first married, of course.

Well, I can remember that day you had told her you wanted her to model Flessheimer undergarments. I'd had a pretty good day, too. That was when I was still selling Fix-it Stocking Menders out in the suburbs from house to house. I figured I'd made \$2.20 in commissions that day. So when Peggy told me about her good news, it seemed we ought to celebrate. So we did. We got Mrs. La Fleur to put the baby to bed in her apartment. Mrs. La Fleur lives in the apartment below us, and she used to take care of little Joe while Peggy and I were working. Then I went out and bought a steak. A real big one and potato chips. And a pint of gin. And a jar of shrimps. Because Peggy is living-crazy about shrimps. And was she pleased! When I got back to the apartment, she'd opened a can of stewed tomatoes and mixed them up with bread crumbs the way I like them. And I could smell the coffee cooking. And Peggy had on a soft pink thing and looked so comfortable with her shoes off. And the room looked cozy with just the lamp going on the table we eat on.

Well, it was a good dinner. The steak just melted in your mouth. I cooked it, because Peggy isn't so good at cooking. And we stuffed ourselves like kids and loved it.

And we had a lot of fun. We laughed a lot about goofy little things. You know how you do sometimes, Mr. Flessheimer? We laughed because we ate so much and because Peggy said my new mustache was crooked and because we broke a plate we'd never liked anyway. And we laughed because the Inadoor bed didn't come out right. Gee, we had fun.

And Peggy was so lovely that night. Sort of like a dream or something. And yet so real and warm in my arms. And she seemed to love me an awful lot. More than she ever had before, I think. And more than she ever has since, Mr. Flessheimer.

You know how sometimes everything seems swell, and you think everything's going to be all right? Well, that's how it was that night. Only afterwards things didn't go so good. First of all, people seemed to stop wanting Fix-it Stocking Menders, so I left that concern to take a job with an insurance company. Only people didn't seem to want insurance, either. And after a month, the company let me go. And I want to say, Mr. Flessheimer, that it wasn't because I couldn't sell it, like the company said, but because people just didn't want it. Then I spent several weeks looking around for a job. I had

some pretty interesting things lined up, but they all seemed to fall through.

Well, I was getting pretty nervous about not working and wondering when I would get a job. But we got along all right. Peggy was getting some new clothes through her modeling work. Sometimes she modeled dresses, she said, and the company'd give her the samples. That was the first I knew your company sold dresses as well as undergarments. So anyway, Peggy managed to look very smart and chipper in spite of having a husband that was doing nothing. And that made me feel good, because I do like Peggy to look nice and classy. I tell her when she's dressed up, like in that black number with the big white bows, she could walk right into the Follies and knock them dead.

Then I did land a job for a few weeks. As a soda jerker. Not a very dignified job, eh, Mr. Flessheimer? But it was just to fill in. Till I got something more in my line. I'd never done anything like it before, except that I did use to dish out ice cream at our Christian Endeavor sociables when I was a kid back in Brooklyn. So I was pretty awkward, as you can imagine. I kept breaking glasses and things. Well, I didn't stay there long. I guess

you're thinking the poor coot certainly has had bad luck, aren't you, Mr. Flessheimer? And that's right. I certainly have.

So I was out of work again. And I began answering ads and going around to see people who might have something for me. A real estate firm offered me a job as office boy. But after all, I'm a husband and a father, and it seemed to me I ought to be able to get something better than just being an office boy. But jobs *are* scarce. I have found that out all right. I have walked the streets for months. And I have worked hard on every prospect that came along. Like Pete Malley saying maybe his father-in-law could take me on selling oil-burners. I thought sure he was going to take me on. But he didn't. And then for so many jobs you have to have experience. And I've only had experience being a salesman. And with the salesman jobs there is always some catch, like you have to have a car or go into another State or have a following. It's pretty discouraging, I can tell you. I wrote to my old insurance company and I said please would they take me back. I said I'd promise to sell one policy a week. I said I'd *promise*. They never answered. Finally I went back to the real estate firm and told them I'd take that job as

office boy. But they already had somebody.

II

Well, the long and the short of it is I haven't worked in ten months. But I haven't been just doing nothing. Since Peggy's been so busy with her modeling, I've been sort of looking after the apartment and the baby. I decided that since I had such a lot of time to myself, I could take care of little Joe, and that would save the three dollars a week we gave to Mrs. La Fleur. And anyway I wanted to get the boy away from her influence which I don't think is so hot on account of her being French. And you know what the French are, Mr. Flessheimer. I guess you have been right in France and seen them there, eh?

And I like taking care of Joe. Because I sure am crazy about that kid. He's three and one-half now and the damndest cutest little scamp you have ever seen. He has big brown eyes like Peggy's. And light hair. And you should hear him talk. He's a scream. I wouldn't be surprised if he turns out to be a Number-One comedian when he grows up. Really I wouldn't. You see, I love Joe more than Peggy does, Mr. Flessheimer,

though that's an awful thing to say about a mother, and she has grown pretty fond of him. But it's been sort of difficult for her. You know what she's like. She's got to be free and on the go. And she didn't want Joe. The first one she didn't want either. That was on the way before we'd been married three months. And was she sore. She wanted to do something. But by the time we had managed to borrow enough money, it was too late. And she had to go through with it. But we lost it. Born dead. A girl. And then when Joe was on the way, she was upset all over again. But she calmed down and didn't complain much because she knew how much I wanted a baby and because I told her I wouldn't let her be tied down by it and how I'd help her as much as I could. And I was working then, and everything looked rosy.

I guess Peggy'd kill me if she knew I was telling you all this, because then maybe you wouldn't think she was so attractive any more.

Well, Joe was born in April. A fine 8 lb. boy. When I could see Peggy, I went to the hospital with a big bunch of lilacs for her. She looked tired but beautiful. She was the most beautiful woman in the ward. I put the lilacs beside her on the bed. And she stared down at

them. I said, I'm glad it's a boy. She didn't say anything. And then I saw tears run down her face. And she turned her head away. I didn't know what to do. I just stared at the lilacs. And I could smell them and the hospital smell, too. And I knew that Peggy still didn't want Joe. And I didn't know what to do. Because it made me feel dirty and ashamed to think of anybody not wanting a baby after it was there and everything. It didn't seem right.

Well, it was last June that I first heard a rumor that Peggy was running around with you. I didn't believe it. I just laughed it off. A husband should know better, Mr. Flessheimer. He should always be on the look-out. Especially when he has a wife who is a high-spirited girl like Peggy. And especially, I guess, when he is no Arrow Collar Ad, being short and thin like me, with only a thirty-four chest and losing hair before I'm thirty.

I did notice Peggy's manner to me had changed a little. She seemed vague and kind of absent-minded when I talked to her. And she never told me anything any more about her work. But I just put it down to the hot weather coming on.

Then one night we went to the movies. And when we came out of

the show, Peggy ran into a girl friend of hers who I had never seen before. And they talked for about ten minutes, and Peggy never introduced me. Well, that made me sore. And on the way home I said, why didn't she introduce me? And Peggy said she forgot. But I thought all of a sudden that she was ashamed of me. And I knew that was it. Was I sore! And I kept getting sorer all the way home. And when we got into the apartment I let loose. So you are ashamed of me, I said. Just because I do all your lousy work for you and take care of the baby and empty slops, you think I'm nobody and not good enough to meet your friends. You are not so almighty wonderful yourself, I said. I could take Joe and walk out on you right now, I said. And Peggy screamed at me, go ahead, walk out, walk out. There's other fish in the sea. Plenty of them. And I'd be glad if I never saw you again. You are not showing me such a hot life. I quieted down. Aw sweetheart, I said. She started crying. Don't you think I want to get somewhere, she said. And be somebody. Don't you think I want nice things, she said. I knew what she meant, and I couldn't stand seeing her cry. Aw sweetheart, I said.

I couldn't sleep that night, think-

ing about what had come over Peggy. I'd sit up and look at her sleeping beside me and shiver all over to think what it would be like without her.

A couple of weeks later I heard some more talk about you and Peggy. And this time I decided I better ask her. We were going to borrow Fred Sullivan's car and go to the country on the next Sunday. I decided I could ask her then, and she wouldn't get mad maybe in the country.

Sunday was one of those warm hazy days. And boy, were we glad we were getting out of the city. We drove up the Post Road into Connecticut. And we found a hill with a lot of pine trees on top. And we sat up there and had a picnic lunch. And Joe had never been in the country before, and he sure had the time of his life.

After lunch Peggy and I lazed around under those pine trees and watched the kid playing. And it was cool under them because the sun just came through in little bits. I reached out my arm and took Peggy's hand in mine. I waited a minute. And then I said, honey, I heard something I want to ask you about. And she said, yeh? And I said, I heard something about you and Mr. Flessheimer. I heard he was taking you places and buying

you clothes. And that's when she said it was all a lie and something the girls in the office was spreading around to damage her good name. And I believed her. I suddenly felt good and happy inside. And I began humming *When Day Is Done*. And then I wanted to make love to Peggy, but she wouldn't let me. But I didn't really care, I was so lazy and happy.

III

Well, we hung around in the country till it began to get dark and Joe got sleepy and cross. And then we drove back to the city. And that was the last day the three of us had any fun together. After that, things were sort of different. Peggy wasn't home much. She worked hard, and lots of times she'd say it rested her to stay downtown and eat with the girls and go to a movie maybe. And I couldn't blame her. She was the one who was working, and she had some fun coming to her, I guess. Even on Sundays sometimes she'd go over to a girl friend's for the afternoon. And why shouldn't she, she said? You can't expect me to be tied to a 2 x 4 apartment, she said. You and Joe do what you like on Sundays, don't you? She meant by that me taking Joe every Sunday to Bronx Park to see the animals. I

said she could come along. I said it would be swell to have her come along. But she said, no, she did not have a yen for animals.

So you see how things were going, Mr. Flessheimer. And then one Sunday evening about supper time the phone rang, and it was some woman's voice. And she said, never mind who this is but it is a friend, a friend who does not want to see you hoodwinked any longer. Do you know where Peggy is right now, she said? Why yes, I said, at Nell Pabst's house. Some of her girl friends are having a little party. Well, she ain't, said this voice, she is with Mr. Flessheimer. And she is with him every Sunday. And sometimes on weekdays she does not do any work but goes right to Mr. Flessheimer's apartment. She's cheating on you, she said, and then hung up.

Well, I thought maybe it was a joke or just some mean person. But I called up Nell Pabst. And Peggy was not there, and there was not a party.

I didn't know what to do. I put Joe to bed, and then I waited up. By midnight Peggy wasn't home. I undressed and sat in the dark waiting. I got scared and I smoked one cigarette after the other. And I kept thinking what that woman had said about Peggy going to your

apartment. And I thought, after all she is a wife and mother and she would not do things like that.

And at five in the morning Peggy came in. And she had more than a few drinks under her belt. And she had on a beautiful white dress that glistened all over that I had not seen before. She slammed the door and turned on the center chandelier. And the light hurt my eyes. And I had to squint. And I felt silly sitting there in all that light in my underclothes. Peggy said, well, you're a pretty picture. And I asked her where had she been. You know where I been, she said. Yes, I know all right, I said. You been at Mr. Flessheimer's. She just kicked off her shoes and sat on the bed. Haven't you, I said. You bet, she said. Peggy, I said, is it true about you going around with Mr. Flessheimer and going to his apartment and all that? Peggy said, of course it's true, you goddam fool, so what? I could not say anything. Peggy fell back on the bed and went right to sleep with her clothes on. I turned out the light. I stood and looked down at her. I couldn't really see her but I could hear her breathing heavy. And I thought she couldn't know what she was doing. She couldn't know.

Well, when Peggy got up a few hours later, she had a fine hang-

over. And she didn't say anything about what we had talked about when she came home. And I hoped maybe she had forgotten it, because I didn't want to say anything about it either. It made me sick.

But she hadn't forgotten it. Because when she left she said she wouldn't be home for dinner that night. And I asked her where was she going. And she said, to Mr. Flessheimer's and what are you going to do about it? I didn't answer her. She said, I'll tell you what you are going to do, wise guy. Nothing. And some day Mr. Flessheimer is going to take me to Miami or Paris maybe. And you are not going to do anything then either. Not if you know what's good for you. I got a right to live my own life. See?

Well, I guess she was joking when she said that about Miami and Paris. But it scared me. And I kept thinking what if it was true. I couldn't stand it, I couldn't stand it!

IV

Listen, Mr. Flessheimer, I have not got any friends. You know, real close ones like you can talk to. Bert Munn he was the one real close pal I had, but he went to Texas and he never writes. So I have not got any one. Only Peggy. And I need her,

Mr. Flessheimer. I need her more than you do. And I think Peggy could be happy with me if you'd only let her alone and not turn her head. Honest I do, Mr. Flessheimer. Something's bound to break for me one of these days. There must be a job for me somewhere. And sooner or later I'll find it. And then maybe Peggy will treat me nice like she used to. Because she's a good girl at heart. Honest she is.

So I'm writing this to you, because I don't know what else to do. If this was the movies, I'd go out and shoot you. But I don't want to shoot you. And even if I did, I don't know where I'd get a gun. Or if I had a lot of money, I could try to beat you at your own game. Or if I had a lot of sex appeal maybe I could hold her that way. But I guess I have not got a lot of sex appeal. But anyway I love Peggy. I love her so much.

Jesus, Mr. Flessheimer, I can't write any more. I'm all choked up. I hope you get what I'm trying to say. I don't know what to do. I don't know which way to turn. Please, please, Mr. Flessheimer, don't take Peggy away from me. Just give me a break, will you?

Sincerely,

Your humble servant,

DAVE GOGGINS

EDITORIAL

WHAT IS A FASCIST?

The All-American bogey of Fascism is being worked overtime — and almost exclusively by the very messiahs who would force America into a definitely Fascist collectivism.

A FEW remarks about Fascism seem to be in order. In our common scale of speech the word Fascism has reached the stage where it is applied to almost any kind of thing or person that one does not like; that is, it is seldom used as a descriptive term, but regularly used as a term of abuse. The glossary of politics is full of such terms. Their history runs somewhat like this: A political movement starts out on the pretense of expressing some lofty social ideal or principle, usually more or less revolutionary, and takes a name roughly descriptive of that principle. Those who are opposed to the movement at once convert the name into a term of obloquy, and apply it indiscriminately to all sorts of persons and things that they wish to besmirch or injure. If the movement fails, the name drops out of currency. If it succeeds, the name sometimes drops out in

favor of some other, but as a rule it becomes respectable and gets an official status which persists long after the ideal or principle which it originally expressed has gone into the discard and been forgotten.

Call a man a democrat today, or say he has democratic ideals, principles or manners, and he takes it as a compliment; but in 1780 and for some time afterward, the chances were that you would have had to stand for a duel or a horsewhipping. Everybody nowadays calls the United States a democracy, though it is notoriously not that or anything like it; but if in 1787 you had told Washington, Madison, John Adams, Jay, Hamilton, that they were establishing the great and glorious democracy of the Western world, you would have an unpleasant explanation on your hands. It is highly instructive to read what the Founding Fathers had to say about democracy, and

compare it with the praiseful fustian which their successors reel out on full-dress occasions today. It is a perfect example of a term which was originally revolutionary, then became a term of indiscriminate reproach, as Fascism is now, and finally graduated up by slow stages into something more than respectability.

On the other hand, if nowadays you called a man a Populist, a Greenbacker or a Locofoco, he would take no offense for he would not know what you were talking about. Those were fighting terms in their day, but they have dropped into disuse because the movements they described have died out. There is one term which we can even now watch on its way out for the same reason — the term *bolshevism*. Twenty years ago it stood high in the lexicon of abuse; anything from bomb-throwing to a demand for better wages was bolshevism. Later, when “the Russian experiment” began to give signs of petering out, the term also began to slip, and it is now so far out of commission that the occasional use of it has a backnumber sound which marks the user as a sort of journalistic Rip van Winkle, unaware that the world has moved on in twenty years.

As a term of abuse, Fascism

stands at the moment as high as any. Our economic royalists are all Fascists. Those opposed to the glaring illegalities of the current labor-war are Fascists. Those who are revolted by the New Deal’s gay game of fast-and-loose with the Constitution are Fascists. Those who show any rudiments of conscience towards the Administration’s brazen thefts and wastage of public money in the wholesale Tammanyizing of our populace are Fascists. As with the counter-charges of Communism, Nazi-ism or what not, the obvious absurdity of the charge makes no difference, nor does the equally obvious ignorance of what Fascism is, or of what makes a Fascist. For example, one of our correspondents lately reached the acme of absurdity in accusing this magazine of being an organ of Fascist propaganda, because we published an extract from Comrade Trotsky’s recent book! Trotsky has just about as much sympathy with Fascism as we have with the New Deal, but no matter; he is opposed to Stalin’s régime, therefore he must be a Fascist, and because we cited him we also must be Fascist.

Concerning the rivalry between Communism and Fascism, there is not one iota of practical difference between the two; and by that we

mean a difference affecting the lives, liberties, and fortunes of ordinary citizens. There are differences between them, as there are between arsenic and strychnine; but the final effect of both upon the conditions of the citizenry is precisely the same, and for that reason the final effect is all that the ordinary citizen need care about or know about. Assuming that the fracas in Spain is a dust-up between Fascism and Communism — which is by no means the case, but supposing that it is — what will be the final effect upon the average Spaniard if either wins? Simply this: he will be left holding the bag if Fascism wins, and if Communism wins he will be left holding the bag. That is precisely all the practical difference between Fascism and Communism.

The ordinary citizen is always left holding the bag after any political contest, just as the ordinary industrious and honest workman is left holding the bag after such a contest for labor-leadership as the one now raging between John L. Lewis and William Green. When the political contest is over, the winning side becomes exactly like the losing side; it becomes exactly like the thing that it has been fighting. Both sides assume at the outset that the end justifies any kind of

means that will bring it about; and thus whichever side wins immediately forgets all about the end and keeps on thinking about the means. Whatever theoretical principles or purposes have been avowed are at once thrown overboard. The winner merely keeps on with the same line of suppressions, violations, confiscations, which both sides had been pursuing, and thus the ordinary citizen continues to get all the worst of it. For instance, Germany was a monarchy and became a republic; and how long was it before republican principles went by the board and republican officials began over again the old disreputable business of “government by decree”? How did the ordinary citizen of Russia profit by a change from the suppressions, violations, and confiscations of Nicholas II to those of Stalin? In our own country there are theoretical differences between Republicans and Democrats, but as we all know, when an election is won by either party, the only result is what John Adams called “a change of impostors”. Can any one in his right mind be naïve enough to imagine that the condition of the average American would be one whit better or worse today if the last election had replaced a mafia of Democratic impostors by a mafia of Republican

impostors? Such a thing would simply invalidate the whole history of the party system.

Hence the theoretical principles and "ideologies" of either Fascism or Communism, like those of our two political parties, are not worth five minutes of anyone's time, except as a matter of curiosity, because practically they mean nothing. It is often said, however, that Fascism is a defensive movement and is therefore deserving of at least a benevolent neutrality. We may freely admit that in all the countries where it is in force it arose as a defensive movement; but a defense against what, and why should that aspect of it interest a citizen of this country? The reply is that it arose as a defense against Communism. If Germany and Italy had not gone Fascist they would have gone Communist, and Fascism ought to interest Americans because Communism is politically a going concern in America, and its growth should be checked; which is obviously why the Administration is attempting to reorganize the government on the lines of Fascism, and consequently it is why the Administration should be supported by all patriotic and intelligent citizens and given everything it wants.

This kind of hooley is fairly popu-

lar with half-hearted supporters of the New Deal, but to sensible people who look at it from the practical point of view, it seems a good deal like a proposal to stand off a cyclone by inviting in an earthquake. In order to see clearly how this is so, let us make a few comparisons. The American system of government is officially set forth in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the first ten Amendments, which are known as the Bill of Rights; so we will take those as our interpreters. The American system, according to the Declaration, regards the State as existing for the people, as the servant of the people. Fascism and Communism agree in regarding the people as existing for the State, as the servants of the State. They also agree that the individual has no rights which the State is bound to respect; the Bill of Rights, on the other hand, lays off large areas of individual liberty which the State may not invade, and in its anxiety over this matter of liberty it even goes so far as to lay down an express provision that "the enumeration of certain rights in the Constitution shall not be construed as denying or disparaging other rights retained by the people". Fascism and Communism unite in maintaining that there is no such

thing as a natural right, but that the only source of any kind of rights is in the will of the State; whereas the American system, according to the Declaration, holds that every man, purely in virtue of his status as a human being, is endowed by his Creator with certain rights, and that those rights are "unalienable".

The American system may be a poor affair, but there it is and it is all we have—"an ill-favored thing, sir, but mine own". One thing is certain, however; in its fundamentals the American system is exactly opposed to the political Tweedledum-Tweedledee which is Fascism and Communism, and consequently if the American system is to be knaved over on the model of either Fascism or Communism it may as well be the one as the other, and therefore the praises of Fascism as a defensive movement need not get any one stirred up. Fascism may be a defensive movement, but it does not defend everything that would either interest the average citizen of any country or do him any kind of good. Moreover, as we have

shown, if the individual American elects to throw over our system and go in for either Fascism or Communism, he may as well toss up a cent for his choice, for all in the world they have to offer him is two different brands of the same thing, which is involuntary State-servitude.

A clever part of the Radical technique today is to insist that each of us choose a definite side; that we be either Fascist or Communist. This ruse very neatly pushes the whole body of liberal and conservative thought into a dim and unreal background; and it has already been highly successful in regimenting a good many American intellectuals.

But it won't work with THE AMERICAN MERCURY. This magazine is, and always will be, steadfastly opposed to the twin gangs of Fascism and Communism. One or the other may win over the American system eventually, and our liberties and these pages may be suppressed: but until that day, though we may be unwittingly about to die, we don't have to salute either gang.



AMERICANA

CALIFORNIA

THE honest advertiser crops up in the learned San Francisco *Chronicle*:

PRIVATE LIBRARIES DUSTED affectionately with no charge for any time spent reading. Phone ORDway 8569.

THE shy and retiring habits of movie stars are further emphasized by the perspicacious San Francisco *Examiner*:

Luise Rainer is the most completely natural person in Hollywood, and the least affected by stellar grandeur. The day following the Academy award, Luise appeared on our Hollywood Hotel broadcast where she was presented with an enormous bouquet of American beauties. But on her way home from the radio station what should the little Rainer do but decide to personally attend to her marketing. With her roses clutched in her arms she went along the stalls feeling the lettuce heads, examining the celery, and weighing out two pounds of beans!

CONNECTICUT

THE Age of Specialization invades the barnyard, according to the want-ad columns of the distinguished Ridgefield *Press*:

WANTED: 1 Large, Experienced, Determined, Setting Hen.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

THE Uplift turns to prettifying place names in the holy crusade to emasculate America, according to the Associated Press:

The American public is beginning to control its tongue when it comes to calling the national scenery by freak names. The United States Geographic Board said today the people are losing their love for such nomenclature. The board has taken a firm stand in blasting titles off the map.

Operating on "Widow's Tears Falls," for instance, it produced Bridalveil Falls. Crooked Lake Number One became Manuka, which is supposed to mean the same thing in Indian; Mud Lake was transformed into Jewell Lake, and Dishwater Pond evolved as Mirror Lake.

ILLINOIS

THE straight-faced Associated Press recalls the aroma of Josephus Daniels in a report from Peoria:

Recruiting Officer Karl K. Jones ruled Walter K. Elger would have to put some clothes on a nude lady tattooed on his forearm before he could join the Navy. Regulations, Jones explained, forbade the enlistment of

persons who had offensive matter engraved on their epidermis.

LOUISIANA

THE so-called Constitutional Crisis is relegated to a position of minor importance by the Woman's Club of Lafayette, according to the alert *Daily Advertiser*:

Mrs. Adolph Jacobs read a paper on the funerals and cemeteries in Mexico, and Mrs. Bollum, reporting on the minor topic of current events, read an article on the Supreme Court situation at the present.

MISSOURI

AT LAST a use for the reams of gaff produced daily by Dr. Roosevelt's bureaucrats is found by the enterprising editor of the *Pierce City Leader-Journal*:

The government is efficient. Its mimeographed publicity articles which come to this office are printed so neatly that we can use the back side for writing news articles on, while most other press agent material is so badly offset that it goes directly into the waste basket.

MONTANA

THESPIAN preparation, as practiced in Fort Benton, according to the erudite *River Press*:

One often hears of "hog calling" contests but Geraldine is to spring something new in a "dog barking" contest

which is sponsored by the senior class of the Geraldine high school. The winner will be honored with a part in the senior class play, "The Nervous Wreck".

NEW YORK

THE usually accurate *Herald-Tribune* confesses to a slight mistake:

Error: A statement was printed Wednesday that Paul Willet, president of the Oxford University Press, now visiting the United States, would be guest of honor at a reception to be held this afternoon at the English Book Shop celebrating the opening of an exhibit of Oxford Press books. It has been learned since that, first, the name is Paul Willert; second, he lives in the United States and is, therefore, not a visitor; third, he is not president of the Oxford Press, but vice-president and manager of the New York office, and fourth, he will not be guest of honor this afternoon, nor will he be at the reception, as he is in Boston.

STILL another diabolic Capitalist plot is uncovered by the alert editor of the *Sunday Worker*:

Did you ever think, when you pick up your Sunday paper, how the funnies are used against labor? How they help keep progressive ideas out of the mind of the average American? Give Little Orphan Annie or Jiggs the once-over again from this angle. America's comic strips have entered the realm of big business, and reflect its psychology. They are a witches' brew of race hates and distortions, and blind acceptance of the standards, ways, and wishes of the Four Hundred. Like the

Pied Piper of Hamlin, they hypnotize the imagination with swirls of color, leading innocents along adventurous roads into swamps of anti-working-class poison.

OHIO

THE New Penology, probably greatly appreciated by the gangsters and murderers of this Great Humanitarian Republic, as reported by the scholarly Ashtabula *Star-Beacon*:

A handwriting expert has been hired to aid the board of parole in determining which prisoners should be released from the State's penal institutions. The graphologist, Mrs. Catherine R. Dobbs of Barberton, not only tries to determine from the slants and stroke of a prisoner's handwriting whether reformation has set in but, she says, aims to aid them by suggestion in leading a better life after they cease to be wards of the state. In her reports on a prisoner, Mrs. Dobbs not only includes her diagnosis of his handwriting but the estimate of his character that her knowledge of psychology and drugs permits her to make, she says.

A HIGHLY moral and indignant subscriber protests to the editor of the celebrated Warren *Tribune Chronicle*:

I think it is disgraceful the way people let their dogs run around. I saw six dogs at one place, and for children to see the going's on is terrible. I say, keep your dog home or go out and see what he is doing.

Mrs. S.

OREGON

THE grimly realistic editor of the Oregon State *Daily Barometer* takes a crack at a foreign poet:

"Oh wind, if Winter comes can Spring be far behind?" Thus queried the immortal Keats more than 100 years ago in the merry days of Elizabethan England. It is to be assured, and rightly, that the British poet knew the obvious answer was "No." But Keats never lived in Oregon's fertile Willamette valley. He was familiar with the rolling hills and the sandy lowlands of England, "that precious gem set in a silver sea." But he never lived in Oregon. Had Keats lived here in the Willamette valley today instead of in the British Isles long ago when things possibly were different, he might change his tune. Were he to step out into an afternoon of a March rapidly running into April and meet, full-faced, not a typical, blustery March wind with its tinge of warmth and fragrance, but a cold, biting gail such as one might expect in January, he probably would junk his poetic ideas about Spring and go back in the house for his muffler and wool socks.

PENNSYLVANIA

THE Adulation reaches poetic heights in the pages of the *Survey*, published by the Pennsylvania Federation of Democratic Women:

MY DAY

"My Day," written by Our Own First Lady, makes it a column rare.

When we turn the pages of History, to read of the great Franklin D.

The great son of America, and

A branch of the Roosevelt Tree
 We know that our First Lady,
 History will record with pride
 Worked in the time of
 Depression, in city and countryside.
 And the columns that will live on
 Forever, will show in a generous way
 That Our First Lady's Time was
 our
 Time, and only called "My Day."

RHODE ISLAND

THE Associated Press reports the loss of a priceless heirloom from the home of a burgher of Union Village:

A liberal reward today awaited the finder of an 83-year-old pair of pants. George W. Lothrop of this village lost the trousers in a Woonsocket bank yesterday. He had taken them there to show to a friend. They were the pants in which Lothrop ran away from home in his boyhood.

TENNESSEE

THE editor of the Nashville *Tennessean* gets his come-uppance from an aroused client:

To the Editor:

You ignorant peckerwood!

It is folks like you that keeps this fine state from being a paradise on earth and I mean you. Why do you think you are smarter than holy rit? The abomination of evolution ought to be stamped out with tooth and nail and you with it. I be easy on you. Maybe you just do not no no better and is just plane ignorant and do not read the Bible like you ought to read it and all like that. You just stop and think what you are doing to the young of this state and you will not write

no more like you do. What I want know is do you love your Jesus? Do you want to go to the mercy seat with sin of evolution black on you soul? I guess that make you afraid now. Well I do not even think you folks at the Tennessean is A-1 Christians so hide your face in shame and don do it, no more and ther is hope still for your black soul.

T. SCUDDER TUTTLE.

VERMONT

BIRTH control gets a new setback in Ethan Allen's home State, according to the advertising columns of the *Springfield Union*:

SMALL HOUSE, new roof, newly painted, 2 car garage, piazza, electricity, flush, village water, \$25 down; 1st baby, \$5; twins, \$10; triplets, \$25; quintuplets, \$100, cash. Deed of place free and clear. Price \$400. No babies taken for down payment.

IN OTHER NEW UTOPIAS

ENGLAND

THE majesty of British law is upheld once more, according to the *Manchester Guardian*:

When a detective stated at North London Police Court yesterday that the officer concerned in a case was "down with 'flu'" the Magistrate, Mr. Bernard Campion, asked "Down with 'flu'? Who is she?"

The detective: "He is down with influenza, Your Worship."

Mr. Campion: "Oh! I thought you meant he was with some girl. Use proper language. I am not accustomed to being addressed like that. You mean that the officer is on the sick list with influenza."

THE STATE OF THE UNION

By ALBERT JAY NOCK

A GOVERNMENT OF MEN

The New York Times headlines that Governor Murphy "Warns Both Sides That He Will Enforce Law Unless Peace Is Reached". Is this malfeasance, or is it justice?

DURING the sit-down strike on General Motors, the Governor of Michigan went on record as saying that if certain things were not done by a certain time he would "enforce the law". Who gave him an option in the matter? Who gave Governor Murphy discretionary power to say when or whether the law should be enforced? Has Michigan a government of laws or a government of men? If the former, what does the Legislature of Michigan think of an executive who treats its enactments in that fashion? How does public opinion in Michigan take it? What about the country at large, the Federal Administration, and our editors and publicists generally?

These would seem to be natural questions with nothing captious or pernicky about them, but such as would come up at once in the mind of any person who is accus-

tomed to living under the ordinary rule of law. The answers to them are exhibitory. As far as is known, neither the people nor the Legislature of Michigan have resented Governor Murphy's conduct or appeared to regard it as anything much out of the way. Editorial opinion has not been noticeably touchy on this point; not at all touchy. Michigan seems quite satisfied, on occasion, to let a government of men supersede a government of laws; and this at once raises the previous question: What kind of people are they in Michigan?

The answer appears to be that they are about the same kind of people as form the great majority elsewhere throughout the United States. The evidence for this is that Governor Murphy is notoriously a stooge of the Federal Administration, which is supposed to be, and no doubt actually is, representative

of that majority. The Administration stood by Governor Murphy; the Secretary of Labor praised his conduct; and general public opinion has apparently followed suit of public opinion in Michigan in giving tacit consent to the idea that it is quite all right for government of laws to give place occasionally to government of men, if things break that way.

So, if that is the sort of people we are, and government of men is the sort of government to which we occasionally think proper to turn, there is not much to say. After the famous blood-purge in Germany, in which some two hundred or more persons were assassinated, Reichskanzler Hitler said:

If some one asks me why we did not invoke an ordinary court to deal with these men, I can only tell him that in this hour I was responsible for the fate of the nation, and therefore the supreme court of the people during these twenty-four hours consisted of myself.

There you have exactly the principle of executive action which Governor Murphy applied, which the Administration approved, which the Secretary of Labor praised, which Michigan countenanced, and which the articulate majority of our people appear to accept as reasonable and right. It is the principle which on occasion

permits an executive to use a free discretion about nullifying, suspending, or evading the provisions of laws which he is under oath to enforce, and substituting for them some arbitrary decision of his own.

If the Germans approve of this principle and relish living under its applications, common courtesy must regard their preference as worthy of all respect. The people of Michigan must likewise be regarded as within their rights, and since our people at large have signified their preference by returning the present Administration to power, they too must be so regarded. On the other hand, our Northern neighbors appear to reject this principle. The Premier of Ontario has served notice that the government of Ontario is a government of laws and not of men. He has been emphatic about it. According to him, law is law in Ontario, its language means exactly what its language says, and sit-down strikes will be dealt with as the law provides if it takes all the resources of the Province to do it. Moreover, he will discuss industrial troubles only with the responsible Canadians concerned. He will have nothing to do with Lewis or Thompson or Martin or any other "paid agitator" who horns in from foreign parts; and he also

made some very salty observations on the "state of anarchy" prevailing in the United States, where government of laws is disallowed.

Pretty plain talk from a friendly neighbor, but we asked for it, no doubt about that. The principle on which the Premier of Ontario is acting was never better put than it was right here in the horse-and-buggy days, in the Constitution of Massachusetts:

In the government of this Commonwealth, the legislative department shall never exercise the executive and judicial powers, or either of them; the executive shall never exercise the legislative and judicial powers, or either of them; the judicial shall never exercise the legislative and executive powers, or either of them; to the end it may be a government of laws and not of men.

The Premier of Ontario is acting on our own old established doctrine of the division of powers, nothing more nor less; the doctrine which Governor Murphy and the Administration have flouted. All talk of Governor Murphy having been confronted by an "emergency" is nonsense, and the Premier is proving it; so is the governor of Connecticut. The sit-down strike is actionable here, precisely as it is in the Province, on seven distinct counts ranging in importance all the way from trespass and blackmail to wilful ob-

struction and (as witness the dust-up in Hershey's chocolate-factory) incitement to riot. All these offenses are amply covered by law. Nothing is needed but officials who have integrity enough to enforce the law in the ways provided by law; officials like the Premier of Ontario and Governor Cross. It is highly doubtful that there will ever be a sit-down strike in Connecticut, for the governor has given notice that his bailiwick is governed by laws and not by men, and that those laws will be enforced. If Governor Murphy had done the same in the first instance, it is equally doubtful that there would be any more sit-down strikes anywhere in the country. He did not do it, however; and why? Because he is a pliant tool of the Administration, and the Administration is a pliant tool of the proletarian vote and must keep its good-will — by legal means, if possible, but if not, then by any means — and that is that.

II

The case of the sit-downers is supposed to bear on "the new jurisprudence" about which various handymen and earwigs of the Administration are indulging in a moderate amount of tub-thump-

ing. We have heard that sort of talk before. It does not take much of a memory to recall, for instance, "the new economics" which similarly-interested persons were touting in Coolidge's time. Under the new economics of that blessed era, natural law was "out". Belief in the laws of supply and demand, of prices and wages, of diminishing returns, and all such moldy truck, was pure superstition. What goes up need no longer come down, the whole need not equal the sum of all its parts, nor was a straight line necessarily the shortest distance between two points on a plane.

Some of us remember those economics better than others, but that is because they were suckers and were taken in. Their experience should have taught the salient lesson that when you hear glib talk about "the new" ethics, politics, jurisprudence, or what not, you may safely bet there is some rascality behind it or else some unconscionable idiocy, or more probably both. On the day I write this, for example, Brother Wallace, chief medicine-man of the erstwhile AAA, is reported as telling the Ethical Society of New York that "the age we are now entering might with equal accuracy be called the new individualism or the new collectivism".

Just so. Exactly. So it might. Because whichever of these edulcorant and sedative terms you choose, you will finally wake up to find that it is a synonym for an ever-accelerated submergence of the individual into a condition of involuntary State-servitude. That is what Brother Wallace and his associate magicians of the New Deal are running us into, and one must say that up to now they have made very good running of it. If you doubt this, calculate the amount of your taxes, direct and indirect, and then figure out how much time you spent last year in working for the State, as against the time you spent in working for yourself. One man I know had to give up one-fifth of his income in income-taxes alone, while one concern I know was forced to give up one-fourth of its profits; which means that the man worked one-fifth of all last year for the State, and the concern worked one-fourth; and the added sum of other taxes, direct and indirect, would of course bring their terms of servitude much higher. So much for Brother Wallace's new ism. Similarly there is every reason to suspect that when all comes to all, the new jurisprudence is merely a device for sanctioning the abandonment of fundamental integri-

ties by those whose particular duty it is to maintain them. In all probability it will turn out to be a compendium or digest of anarchy, regularizing the successive steps by which a government of men has supplanted a government of laws.

It appears that New York City is promised a run of the new jurisprudence. The *Times* of that city reported the other day that Borough President Harvey, who wishes to be mayor, said in a public speech that if he controlled New York's Police Department, he would rid the city of Communists in two weeks, with the aid of a liberal supply of rubber hose. Mr. Harvey is not politically affiliated with the New Deal—he is a Republican—but his spiritual affiliation with it seems to be complete. He seems to be as strong for a government of men as Governor Murphy himself, for there is certainly nothing in the laws of New York to sanction beating up Communists with rubber hose, but on the contrary, everything against it.

To check up properly on Mr. Harvey's fine and stirring exposition of the new jurisprudence, it is useful to go back to a few incidents of New York's mayoralty in the horse-and-buggy days. In 1911, Socialists were regarded as unfavorably as Communists are now,

especially by the police. In his message of February 21st to the Board of Aldermen, Mayor Gaynor wrote:

I have particularly made the police authorities understand that those who entertain views of government, or of economic or social order, different from ours, are not to be interfered with or denied the right of freedom of speech and of assembly on that account. A propaganda by intellectual persuasion and peaceable means for changes in form of government or in the economic or social order, is lawful and not to be meddled with, much less oppressed, by the police.

In the same year a poor and obscure boy was illegally arrested and mishandled by the police. The Mayor examined his case, and on December 19th wrote the Police Commissioner a blistering letter, ending with these words:

The police must be made to understand that they cannot arrest and lock people up as they like, but that they must keep within the law. The only way to enforce the law is the way prescribed by law. That which cannot be done lawfully must not be done at all, by the police or any other public officials from the President of the United States down. This is a government of laws and not of men.

On July 7, 1910, in answer to a clergyman who had asked him to suppress some motion-pictures of a prizefight, the Mayor wrote:

If it lay in my power to say whether the pictures should be exhibited, it would not take me long to decide it.

I do not see how it can do any one any good to look at them. But will you be so good as to remember that ours is a government of laws and not of men? Will you please get that well into your head? I am not able to do as I like as mayor. I must take the law just as it is, and you may be absolutely certain that I shall not take the law into my own hands. You say you are glad that the mayors of many cities have "ordered" that these pictures shall not be exhibited. Indeed? Who set them up as autocrats? If there be some valid law giving any mayor such power, then he can exercise it; otherwise not. The growing exercise of arbitrary power in this country by those put in office would be far more dangerous and is far more to be dreaded than certain other vices that we all wish to minimize or be rid of. People little know what they are doing when they try to encourage officials to resort to arbitrary power.

I rather dread repeating what the Mayor said in his message to the schoolchildren of New York on Independence Day, July 4, 1912, for fear that THE MERCURY will be had up for *Majestätsbeleidigung*. However, the chance is worth taking, so here it is:

We must therefore be vigilant of every little approach to despotism,

however little it may be. We must see to it that those whom we elect to office do not go outside of the laws or set themselves up above the laws and do as they please. It has always been the case throughout the world that the officials who did this did it on the plea that the laws were not good enough, that they could do better than the laws prescribed. Beware of all such officials. We do not want officials who have any lust of power. We want officials who are very careful about exercising power. We want officials who are careful to exercise no power except that given to them by the people by their laws. There is no more dangerous man in a free country, in a democracy, than an official who thinks he is better than the laws.

In the clear light of the new jurisprudence, the new collectivism, the New Deal, and the new what-not, such sayings are probably to be regarded as museum-pieces, with no practical interest for forward-looking citizens of this great Republic. Perhaps, however, our less sophisticated neighbors up in Canada might like to look at them, so I have pleasure in bringing them to their attention.



THE BOOK PREVIEW

THE LIFE OF RILEY¹

BY HARVEY FERGUSSON

JAMES WARDEN RILEY came to town with the railroad in the early 'Eighties. Born of that Protestant-Irish stock which is sometimes known as the Old Black Breed, he was a handsome young man with a bold aquiline nose, heavy black hair, a darkly ruddy complexion, and a prominent chin faintly tinged with the purple of a heavy beard which was always closely shaven. He stood a little over six feet, was powerfully built, and bore himself with a dignity that could harden into a cold reserve or relax into an easy affability, as the occasion might demand.

This admirable manner was at least as much professional as personal, for Jim Riley was a bartender. In any time or place, to be a good bartender requires a cultivated manner and certain moral qualities, and in the West of the last century this profession was an especially exacting one. The saloon was the male social center of the pioneer world, and it was also frequently a center of disturbance. Across three feet of polished wood the bartender had to face all kinds of men, including some dangerous ones, often drunk, usually armed and seldom adequately restrained by the law. He did more than dispense drinks — he presided over a gathering that always contained potential violence. Good bartenders were important and well paid.

Jim Riley was one of the best. Before he had been in town six months he was in charge of the bar at Wallace brothers' Little Palace, which was the town's largest business in daily turnover and amount invested. It was a typical establishment of the kind that flourished in what old-timers call the wide open days. It had a fifty-foot bar with at least three men behind it and five in rush hours. Its mirrors and glassware, its massive brass cuspidors and polished woodwork, set a new standard of elegance for the town. Above the bar hung a larger-than-life size oil painting of an infinitely voluptuous nude reclining on a greensward with her chin in her hand, her eyes appropriately downcast,

¹ Excerpt from *The Life of Riley* by Harvey Fergusson, to be published this month by Houghton Mifflin.

and her ample hip bulging provocatively heavenward. Behind the barroom was a complete gambling joint where Keeno and roulette were played upon a very high ethical level, the games being widely known as absolutely honest. There were also poker tables and sometimes faro. The Wallace brothers controlled the restaurant next door and operated a small hotel upstairs. They were mining men who spent less than half of their time in town and a reliable employee such as Riley was of great value to them. He was soon in charge of the entire first floor, emancipated from a white apron except when he chose to don one in rush hours or to mix some special drink for a special customer.

His function and his gift were essentially social and they grew steadily in importance. He knew everyone and everyone trusted him. Men looking for jobs were advised to see Jim Riley, and so were men looking for labor. He had a marked aptitude for bringing the right people together in the right way and some deals of large import were made through his agency. He might have gone into any business in those days when all businesses were growing, when almost every year was a better year than the last, when the steady Westward push of men and money made life lucrative and exciting, kept hope high and credit easy. But Jim Riley was never much interested in money. It came to him easily and he let it go the same way. He lent a great deal of money, got some of it back, and never worried about the rest. He knew the contentment of one who served his fellows easily, lubricated the points of social contact, and felt sure of his place and usefulness.

He was hard only in the face of violence and he had to face it more than once. It was a part of his legend that he never carried a gun. What is more, he was never seen to clench a fist. He had large powerful hands with heavy black hair on the backs of them, and when he had to fight he fought open-handed, slapping men down like a bear. His huge palms made an almost impregnable guard and he had been seen to slap a man clear across the floor. His courage was never questioned and his speed was amazing, probably in part because he drank nothing in working hours and little at any time. He had learned that a man can strike downward with his hand faster than the fastest can draw a gun. When dealing with armed customers, he kept close to them and became an expert in disarmament. Once he reached across his bar and brought a heavy hand down upon the head of an excited cowboy who was going for a gun. The cowboy's chin made a dent in the woodwork which was afterwards much admired.

When he had been in town two years, Jim Riley was a prominent citizen but he owned nothing except his clothes and a trotting horse. He probably never would have owned anything more except for Pete Angell.

That remarkable Sicilian, whose correct name was Pietro De Angelis, had

the temerity to visit the town with about seven words of English, a hand-organ, and a monkey. Many of the citizens had never seen a monkey and most of the Mexicans had never even heard of one. Pete drew a crowd immediately and the monkey harvested nickels and dimes in his little hat at an unprecedented rate. Then things began to happen. A Mexican woman screamed. She said the monkey had grabbed her by the leg and she regarded him as a small and diabolical-looking man. A man kicked the monkey and it ran screaming up a telegraph pole where it was besieged by a half dozen yelping dogs while the crowd yelled. Pete charged the dogs and hit one of them with a brick. A Mexican struck Pete. He fell and came up with a double-edged stiletto in his hand. Three Mexicans closed in on him and backed away from a scuffle, one of them with a cut in his arm that spurted red arterial blood in an alarming way. Pete backed away, with his monkey under his arm, abandoning his organ. The crowd hesitated for a moment. Then, excited by the sight of blood, it gathered suddenly into a single-minded mob and charged down on the stocky little man with the bloody knife. Pete ducked into a doorway, dropped his monkey, lifted his left arm as a guard and his right to strike. The crowd paused, those in front trying to stop while those behind pushed them on.

The doorway in which Pete had taken refuge was that of Lizzie McMahon's three-dollar parlor house, the most important establishment of its kind in the town. Lizzie, necessarily a day sleeper, was awakened by the rumpus, came thundering downstairs, and stood in the doorway with her hands on her hips and her face blazing righteous wrath. Pete ducked under her arm as she emerged and went up the way she had come down so suddenly that she never knew she had rescued him until later.

Lizzie was nearly six feet tall in her satin mules, and although she had not then achieved the bulk of her later years she was a big woman in every sense of the word. She lifted one mighty bare arm, pointed majestically down the street.

"Get to hell out of here!"

The sentence was a yell of rage that seemed to be ripped out of her deep contralto throat. Lizzie was generally a good-humored woman, but she had a temper and a strong sense of her personal rights. Being suddenly awakened in broad daylight always sent her into a scarlet Irish rage.

A man with a gun trying to break up that riot might have had a good deal of trouble, but a great angry woman in a billowing purple kimono was another matter. A Western mob never rushed a woman. There was a moment of silence. Then someone laughed. Others joined in.

"Give 'em hell, Lizzie. I'm for you!" somebody yelled.

Lizzie had captured the spotlight. The sliced Mexican and the fighting

dago were alike forgotten. Lizzie's broad face relaxed into a grin. The crowd sagged, began to disintegrate. Lizzie dismissed them with a wide gesture, went in and closed the door.

It was Lizzie McMahon who sent Peter to Jim Riley, not because he was a special friend of hers, but because she knew him as a man who found jobs for people. Jim took one long hard look at the stocky little Italian, firm-planted on his feet, unsmiling and unscared. He always took one good look at a man and acted on the hunch he then had. Generally it seemed a good hunch. He had quick and definite impressions of individuals, but neither the time nor the inclination to study them.

He offered Pete a job cleaning up the barroom, which, next to playing the piano, was considered the lowest occupation the establishment could offer a man. No good American would take it unless he was absolutely down and out. He would then shirk it while he had it and quit it at the first opportunity. It was therefore nearly always open.

Pete, the first Italian to hit the town, differed from all good Americans in several striking ways. He took his job seriously and worked at it hard. He could sweep a floor and lay down a fresh coat of sawdust with a combination of efficiency and dignity that was amazing to all beholders. He worked absorbed, unsmiling, "busy as a cat on a sand pile", someone said. But not to him. His manner invited neither jest nor familiarity. He polished a brass spittoon like an artist putting the last touches upon a masterpiece. Riley was delighted with his work.

"I bet he'd kill a man that spit in one before he was finished with it," he remarked to Ed Fowler one day.

Ed nodded.

"What became of his monkey?" Ed asked.

"I don't know," Riley replied. "Maybe he ate it. You can be sure he didn't let it go to waste."

His frugality in that town was matter for wonder. He slept on a table in the gambling room. At noon he would go across the street to a bakery, buy a loaf of bread, sit down on the back step, cut off huge slices with a large dangerous-looking knife, and wolf them down without benefit of butter or coffee. If he had anything else it was a slice of bologna from the free lunch counter. Riley used to give him a glass of red wine once in a while and that was the only drink he cared for. He probably lived on about twenty cents a day and saved money from the first week.

When he wasn't working he was listening and watching. He learned English in an amazingly short time and spoke it with very little accent, but he never did learn to write it. Most of his leisure was devoted to watching the

gambling games with a curiously impassive face. Ed Fowler called Riley's attention to this one day.

"He's a natural-born dead pan," Ed remarked. "You can't tell no more by his face than you can by the back of his hand. He'd sure be a hard one to take in a game of stud."

It was true. Such a face was the greatest single asset a gambler could have. Pete might make a good one, Riley perceived, if he could learn the games. Moreover, Riley had a feeling that something must be done for him. It seemed a moral certainty that Pete was not destined long for the career of a broom-and-shovel man. Riley decided to give him a chance as a gambler, and he soon saw that a chance was all Pete needed. He was a born gambler, and more than that, he was a born manager of men and money.

That was a day of rapid rises and Pete rose. Within two years of his celebrated battle and rescue he was in charge of the games at the Little Palace and he was a man wholly transformed. A natty dresser, he wore always a huge derby hat and small pointed shoes with very high military heels, both of which added to his height. Even with these factitious aids he stood only about five feet four, but what he lacked in size he made up in dignity and force of character. He spoke little, but what he said was nearly always the last word on the subject.

Pete Angell was a shrewd, passionate, and somewhat ruthless man. His early struggles had left him hard. He thought of himself always as an embattled man, one against the field, and he had no mercy for those who opposed him. Like most men of that type he had strong loyalties to the few individuals he liked, and the chief recipient of his devotion was Jim Riley. He regarded Riley not only as his best friend but as his one trusted ally in the business world, and he soon began to insist that they should start a place of their own. Riley had no money, but Pete had plenty, and both of them had credit. Riley didn't want to take the chance at first. He was comfortable, satisfied, and devoid of ambition. He lived in and for his human contacts, felt no need to conquer the world because he knew he could win it. But neither could he resist Pete's persuasions indefinitely. He was not a resistant man.

Two blocks from the Little Palace was a bar that had a bad name. It had changed hands four times in as many years and had bankrupted two owners. A man had been killed across its bar and it had caught fire twice. Pete proposed to buy it. Riley hesitated. Then it occurred to him to name it the Lucky Spot, and that decided him to take a chance.

The Lucky Spot was inevitably a success. Pete Angell stood behind it, so to speak, and Jim Riley stood in front of it. They made an unbeatable combination. Pete was in the place fourteen hours a day. He never did anything

but work. Jim Riley, as he grew prosperous, became more and more a sportsman. He had two horses now, both blooded. One he drove on the racetrack in Old Town, sitting right behind the horse's tail in a little rubber-tired sulky, winning blue ribbons on the Fourth of July, getting an immense boyish pleasure out of speed, dust, good fellowship, and a shouting crowd. He liked to win but even more he liked the fact that even the men he beat were glad to see him win. On Sundays, in Fall and Winter, he nearly always went duck-hunting with a crowd of ten or twelve friends. Riley became a famous shotgun shot, and introduced first pigeon-shooting and then trap-shooting to the town. He was a social leader in his own way, wholly unknown to the ladies of the best families, but important to their husbands, an organizer of firemen's balls and community picnics, a figure at all political gatherings, who wouldn't make a speech or run for anything, but was courted by all candidates.

In the warm weather, Jim Riley used to go driving behind one of his trotters almost every evening in a shiny buggy, with a blue ribbon tied to his whip handle. He would always drive down the main street of the town first, and then out one of the valley roads. He nearly always started alone, but nine times out of ten he would pick up someone, friend or stranger. He would give anyone a lift. Nearly everyone he passed waved him a greeting. There was not a better known man in the town.

II

Mary Chase Morgan came to town about the time Jim Riley reached the height of his importance, but she knew nothing of the exciting and satisfying world he lived in. What she saw with tired and lonely eyes was a village of six or seven thousand people that looked as though it had been started in a hurry and never finished. Its heart and center was a couple of blocks on Main Avenue, nearly all stores, saloons, and barber shops, built mostly of wood and tin, with still some two-story fronts in the frontier style, with unpaved streets and wooden sidewalks. Saddle horses, buggies and teams kept the dust stirred up and the hitch-racks filled. The first few bicycles bumped precariously over the chuckholes, jingling their little bells. At night this part of the town blazed with the yellow light of kerosene lamps, jangled with the music of cheap pianos, and was thronged with men, especially on Saturdays. The rest of the town was a wide scattering of wooden houses and a few brick ones along sandy streets, with many vacant lots full of weeds where rattlesnakes and jack rabbits still found sanctuary. There were a few nice cottonwood trees, but the place, taken as a whole, looked bare, sparse, and desolate. In the Summer it was hot with a blazing white heat that would almost

fry an egg on a rock. In the Winter the wind blew, sweeping the town with the sand of unconquered deserts.

Mary Chase Morgan hated the place. She was a school teacher and came from Mobile, Alabama. Her family was one of the best in the South—a fact which had been heavily impressed upon her from her earliest years. Her father was a cousin of Morgan the raider, and the Morgans, although they varied greatly in social importance, included some very fine families in Virginia and traced a long line back to Wales. Her mother's family, the Chases, were socially and genealogically impeccable. Mary had always understood that merely to be a Chase was an occupation in itself and an exacting one.

From these exactions Mary had suffered all her life. Most of the males of the Chase and Morgan families had been either killed in the Civil War or ruined by it. Mary had been raised by her mother and her grandmother in a kind of genteel poverty that was almost a standardized condition in the South of the post-war generation. They had a large house and a Negro butler, but sometimes not enough to eat. Mary was a tall, thin girl of the kind that is slow to bud. She was shy, proud, self-conscious, and a good deal of a prig without ever suspecting it. The family house was mortgaged to send her to a fashionable finishing school in Richmond where she learned French, fancy work, music, and the deportment of a lady, but met no men. At nineteen, Mary hardly knew what a man was, except by hearsay. When she came back to Mobile she made her formal debut, badly dressed and badly scared. She fell in love with a young man who kissed her once, at a dance, thinking nothing of it, and married another girl a little later. Neither he nor anyone else ever knew that he had broken Mary's heart. Most of the next two years she spent nursing her mother, who then died, leaving Mary with five hundred dollars in cash, some family silver, and a cough.

The cough was not positively diagnosed, but it was recognized that Mary must go to a high altitude. Some important friend of the family knew Judge Amos W. McGavock, who then held the appointive position of federal district judge in the town and had great influence. He got Mary her job teaching school and introduced her to Mrs. Schermer, who conducted a very respectable boarding house, perhaps the only place in town, outside of a private family, which was wholly suitable as the residence of an unaccompanied lady.

Every morning Mary walked about half a mile along a sandy road which was supposed to be a street, lifting her voluminous skirt above the dust, to the fourth-ward school. For eight hours she struggled painfully with her fifty pupils, more than half of whom were Mexicans. Mary was not a born teacher nor a good disciplinarian, and neither was her strength equal to her task. She sometimes had fevers at night and more than once she saw blood

on her handkerchief. She was having a very hard time but no one knew it, for Mary was proud and she had courage of the kind that is wholly unaggressive but immensely enduring.

Sometimes after school Mary went for a little walk because she had been told to stay out in the open air as much as possible. On Sunday she generally went to Judge McGavock's house for an immense noon-day dinner, very good, with fried chicken and sweet potatoes prepared by a nigger cook the Judge had imported from Alabama. After dinner the Judge would go to sleep in a hammock, with a cigar between his fingers while she and Mrs. McGavock talked about people they both knew back in God's country. They were fully agreed in their profound dislike of the West.

There were many young men in the town, but Mary had no facilities for meeting them and she was wholly incapable of putting herself forward. It is not likely that most of the young men about town would have felt much interest in Mary if they had met her. Mary was potentially a good-looking girl, too, but neither she nor anyone else knew it. She had a charming figure of a slender kind, with small pointed breasts, trim buttocks, and wide shoulders for a woman. Her hands and feet were long and slim and she moved with what grace her costume permitted. But the clothes women then wore might have been designed to conceal all that Mary had to offer. Her best dress, which she wore only on Sunday, had huge puff sleeves and a high collar that caught her under the chin. Her skirt was stiff and voluminous, supported by three to five petticoats and weighted at the edges with leaden slugs. This superstructure was anchored to a corset which suppressed her gentle curves to a rigid line, fore and aft. Her heavy hair was piled high upon her head and surmounted by a large straw hat trimmed with an ingenious artistic composition in which a stuffed parrot appeared to be hopefully brooding a bunch of grapes. Mary was annexed to her headgear by means of three pins about eight inches long, any one of which would have made a deadly weapon. The total effect was indisputably genteel but not especially voluptuous.

Mary had handsome features which were rather large. Her hair was dark red and her eyes decidedly green — a coloring which came direct from the Welsh Morgans. Her mouth was large and potentially generous but had typically a somewhat repressed expression. Her face was thin and pale, and ladies of that period did not paint. Mary might have been made to appear beautiful but most of the time she looked like a picture of misery defying its fate. Most of the time, too, she spoke in a soft, suppressed voice which was wholly unsuited to her profession, but once in a while she laughed. When she did she seemed suddenly transformed, for her laugh was a rich and musical peal that carried like the voice of a bird.

Mary seldom laughed, she seldom had anything to laugh about, but when she did, her laughter was often uncontrollable. She would laugh until tears ran down her face and she was exhausted, and afterwards she would feel immensely relieved. She had been subject to these rare and startling fits of laughter for years. They had disgraced her at school and at formal dinners in her mother's house, and she dreaded them, but perhaps she could not have lived without them. Sometimes they served her unexpectedly well. When she first began teaching, her pupils were rebellious. They fairly hazed her by starting spit-ball riots behind her back, giggling in the midst of recitations, asking embarrassing questions. Mary was distressed and showed it. More than once she was on the edge of tears. Then suddenly one day she began to laugh. She threw back her head and shouted her laughter at the ceiling. She laughed until her hair fell down, her face was flushed, and her eyes were wet and shining. The pupils laughed with her at first, but she outlaughed them all. When she finally gained control of herself, they all sat silent, awestruck. She took up the lesson where she had left it off, and everything was easy and peaceful for a while. In fact, it was never so bad again. Children have their perceptions, and in Mary's laugh they had heard a voice of abandon and defiance that won their sympathy.

Mary was not especially distressed by her lack of social success in the town. She did not think it contained such a thing as a man who would interest her. She thought of herself as an alien there, and without being aware of her own snobbery, she thought of herself as an aristocrat among barbarians. Besides that, the male half of the human race for years had been to her only the subject of a vague hope and a vaguer dream. When she was about fifteen she had cherished a vision, that came both waking and sleeping, of a gallant horseman who snatched her up and carried her away to bliss and glory. She came to be ashamed of that childish fantasy and denied it a place in her musings, but her thoughts of love remained the remote and fantastic ones bred of inexperience. She dreamed not of husbands and houses and trousseaux but of some sudden and miraculous encounter with a being such as she had never seen.

It may be that this naïve romanticism prepared her for the coming of Riley, enabled her to do the daring things she did. He had somewhat the temper and look of a knight, even though he sat behind his charger instead of upon it and carried a buggy whip instead of a lance. Certainly his approach was the perfection of gallantry. He simply slowed his magnificent sorrel trotter to a walk in the road beside her one June evening after school. It is not likely that he did so with any intention toward her, for he was not a presumptuous man. She looked up and their eyes met. She saw a big, handsome, ruddy man

whose face expressed a most unmistakable friendliness. He saw a tall pale girl, with great green eyes of a peculiar and arresting intensity, born partly of thwarted eagerness and partly of disease. Both of them smiled and the horse stopped. Riley lifted his hat.

"Won't you let me give you a lift, Miss?"

If Mary had stopped to think she would never have permitted herself to be accosted by a stranger on a public road, but Mary did no thinking. She seemed then and later to be moved by some inward certainty that triumphed easily over prejudice and hesitation. Riley was in the road beside her and helping her into the buggy before she knew it.

"You're the new teacher at the fourth ward," he told her, as he took up the reins.

"Yes," she said. "How do you know?"

Riley laughed.

"I know all about this town," he said. "I'm Jim Riley and I run the Lucky Spot."

Mary had never heard of Jim Riley and she didn't know what the Lucky Spot was, but she felt unexpectedly at ease.

"I'm glad to know you, Mr. Riley," she said. "And I'm glad of the ride."

"It's nice of you to ride with me," he told her. "I hate to ride alone. Where can I take you?"

"I was just going for a walk. . . ." Mary began.

"Then you can make it a ride instead," Riley suggested.

Without waiting for a reply, he tightened the reins on his trotter and chirruped, obviously proud. The horse sped like a machine, high-headed and high-stepping, muscle of mighty haunches playing under a satin coat, sending a steady rhythm through shaft and trace and through their bodies too. Wind played in their faces. Mary sat delighted, smiling. She felt as though all at once she were getting away from everything. She was off her aching feet and out of the burning town. She felt cool and free. She wished that horse would trot on forever.

Riley, looking sidelong, saw delight upon her eyes and mouth. He loved to be appreciated. He tightened the rein a little more and chirruped again and the horse went faster. He was probably stepping off eighteen miles an hour. He left barking dogs behind and imperiled terrified chickens in the road. Riley slowed him down three miles north of town where some cottonwoods shaded the road.

"What a lovely horse!" Mary said. She took off her big hat, which the speed of their going had almost dislodged. Riley turned and looked at her and turned quickly away again.

"Old Bob is all right," he said. "He's nearly fourteen and 'way past his top. I'd like to show you the six-year-old I have out at the fair grounds. He's done a mile in two-fifty and I expect him to do better. . . . Would you have time to go as far as the bridge?"

"Just so I get back for supper," Mary said.

Riley had tact. He asked her no questions and said nothing about himself. Instead he made things easy by inviting her attention to everything along the road — a jack rabbit, a covey of quail, a Mexican woman baking bread in an outdoor oven, a whirlwind marching along a distant horizon. He was a simple, outlooking man who liked the face of the earth and had an interested eye for all that moved upon it. He drove her across the bridge and showed her a view of the valley and the river from a hilltop. It looked pretty from there, lying in a strip of green and silver across the barren land.

On the way home he couldn't think of much to say and neither could Mary, but she did not feel embarrassed by their silence. She felt rested and easy, and relaxed in her seat. Their knees came gently together and she was acutely aware of the contact, but she didn't want to gather her skirts and pull away. It would have seemed too obvious. She became increasingly conscious of his physical presence, partly because she had been so seldom near to men — of his large muscular hairy hands, his smooth and blue-tinged jaw, the faint odor of bay rum and good cigars which was to her an exotic and not unpleasant perfume.

When he helped her down at the boarding house, each could see surprise and interest in the eyes of the other. Both of them knew that a bond had been formed between them — the bond of nascent desire that stops at no boundaries and ignores all differences, that works against a thousand perils to make all men one kind. It could not be simply denied. He hesitated and Mary waited.

"Could I . . . will you . . . go again some time?" he asked. It was the first time he had seemed at all confused.

"I'd love to," Mary said. And she was amazed at her own unmaidenly assurance.

Riley thanked her gravely, climbed into his buggy, lifted his hat, chirped to his horse, and clattered down the street with a fine flourish in a cloud of dust. Mary swept into the house of Schermer with a quick, light step and her head in the air. It seemed as though their brief contact had empowered them both.

When next they went driving, Mary had learned that he was the town's leading saloon-keeper and had pondered the fact long and well. Back in Mobile a saloon-keeper would have been as much beyond the pale of her

caste as a train robber. Mary had been raised upon organized snobbery, but she had lived for a long time in loneliness and misery, and she had felt happy with this man. She debated the matter formally with herself, but it was a sham battle. When she saw him waiting outside the schoolroom door, she knew the issue had never been in doubt. After that they went for drives several times a week, and Mary helplessly knew those drives were what she lived for.

Riley did all a man could do to make the situation easy for her. He showed unmistakably that he knew Mary was a lady and that he knew what was due a lady. He asked her no questions and offered no confidences. They met only in daylight and traveled only on public thoroughfares. It was with some hesitation, after they had known each other nearly a month, that he asked permission to call her Mary and suggested that she address him as James. Yet, on either side of the wall of manner they had set between them, a tension was gathering, and the barrier did not make the tension less.

One evening when they sat on their hilltop, they could find nothing to say. It was September now and the days were getting shorter. They watched the sun set and twilight enveloped them. Riley turned and looked at her and she lowered her eyes. Had she met his look it would have been different. Her bowed head seemed the beginning of a submission. Tentatively, yet quickly, like a man capturing a butterfly, Riley put one large hand over both of hers.

Mary was frightened but she did not pull her hands away. It seemed to her as though she were paralyzed for the moment. She knew that if she didn't do something quickly, he would. She could feel it coming. And then it came, in the form of a firm kiss that pushed her head back and forced her lips apart. When it ended, Mary said: "Oh!"

They were silent for a moment, Mary feeling profoundly inadequate to this unfamiliar situation. She knew that she ought to reprove him but seemed unable to find the necessary words. Riley broke the silence.

"Mary, would you marry me?" he asked gravely.

Mary looked up at him with a face full of pain. She reached out and touched his hand.

"No, James," she said. "I couldn't do that."

Riley looked away and was silent. He was silent for a long time. Then he took up the reins and drove slowly down the hill and townward, without saying anything.

Mary was in misery. She gave him a quick sidewise glance. His profile was as unrevealing as a rock. She sat twisting her hands in her lap. For the first time she felt a surge of antagonism toward him. He was torturing her as definitely as though he had twisted her arm. She felt like screaming. She felt like turning upon him and pulling his hair. She couldn't stand it.

Riley, evidently, could. When they were about half-way back to town, he suddenly made a drawling indifferent remark. He began talking about nothing in particular, pointing with his buggy whip at things along the road, as he had a habit of doing. Mary had to answer him. Little by little the tension lessened. By the time they got to town they were talking almost as though nothing had happened.

III

Mary left him with a feeling of helpless misery, and that feeling grew as days went by and she heard nothing from him. It filled her throat. It prickled in her eyes. It spoiled her appetite. Why had she refused him? She didn't know exactly. She didn't truly care any more whether he was a saloon-keeper or what he was. But she had a deep intuitive feeling that marriage with him simply wouldn't work. She was afraid. She did not fear Riley any longer, but she did fear the town. Not the private submission of marriage but the public one was what she dreaded. . . .

It was no use thinking about it now because he would probably never come back, she thought. And then what would she do? She couldn't stay here — that was certain. Without Riley and his buggy rides this town would now be unendurable. For a week she lived in misery and suspense, and then one day she saw him waiting outside the schoolroom door, big and ruddy and smiling, just as he had always appeared. She went out to meet him.

"Oh! It's you. . . ." She tried to sound casual and unconcerned, but she knew her voice had betrayed her immense relief.

The thing she hated about him was his calm, his patience. Tense and explosive herself, she couldn't understand it. He went about everything as though the end were foreordained. It was perfectly clear now that their relation had reached a crisis. But Riley didn't seem to know it. He took her driving several times in the afternoon and didn't even try to kiss her again. She had dreaded the moment when he would, but now she began to hate him because he didn't. He seemed to assume that their relation had gone back to the stage before the momentous moment on the hill-top. And that, of course, was nonsense. Something had to happen.

What happened first was a September rainstorm. Riley pointed it out with his buggy whip, gathering over the mountains, and remarked that he guessed it wouldn't break before they got home. Meantime, they were getting farther from home all the time. The storm did break and they made a magnificent drive through howling wind and the first big pelting drops to a little town nine miles up the valley. There they took refuge in a wayside place run by

a Mexican named Ortiz. Ortiz had a grocery store, a saloon, and a restaurant to the extent that his wife would feed wayfarers if properly approached. The rain poured down by the bucketful while they sheltered in the Ortiz store and Riley carried on a long diplomatic negotiation in Spanish with the short fat dark man.

"We'll have to have supper here," he said. "Do you mind? Mrs. Ortiz is a good cook. I eat here lots of times when I'm hunting."

"I don't know what Mrs. Schermer will think," Mary demurred.

"We couldn't get back in time for supper anyway," he said. "I can't take you home wringing wet."

Mary felt that it was a perilous and unconventional situation, but she was really delighted with it. It was not hard to persuade her.

They had a most peculiar meal, of tamales and beans with chile, neither of which Mary had ever eaten before. Riley held further talk with Ortiz and the Mexican brought forth a bottle of wine. Riley sniffed the cork, opened the bottle, sniffed some more. In these matters he was an expert.

"It's just the native product," he explained. "But Anastasio swears this is fourteen years old." He poured two glasses and put one before her. She drew back as though it had been poison.

"I never drink anything," she said.

"It'll do you no harm," Riley advised. He didn't seem to care whether she drank it or not. She drank it, tentatively at first, and then with a modest and restrained enthusiasm. She could feel it all through her body. She felt fine.

Afterwards they went out into the cool, storm-swept air and drove slowly homeward. Mary began to laugh and stopped with some difficulty, stuffing her handkerchief into her mouth.

"Honestly, I'm not drunk," she said. "I get laughing fits like this every once in a while."

Riley laughed, too. He put his hand over hers again and she sat silent, expectant. They were jogging slowly and it was dark. Riley let the reins go lax and the horse walked. Then, apparently of his own accord, Old Bob stopped and looked back, as though sensible that something had gone wrong with his driver. Riley turned to Mary and kissed her. His hand found her breast and cupped it gently. They kissed for a long time and neither of them said anything. When a wagon came along, Riley let her go and drove on slowly. But soon the horse stopped again and again their lips came inevitably together.

Their whole ride home was a slow and interrupted progress. It took them over two hours. The scant and rattling traffic of the roadway ceased. The lights in the scattered houses went out. It was very dark for a while, then a

moon rose, and they saw each other's serious faces in its pale bright light. Neither of them spoke. Riley seemed bent on making that ride last as long as possible. Mary had almost forgotten where she was. She had taken her great hat off and laid it in her lap and it slid unregarded to the floor of the buggy. Her piled-up hair collapsed little by little until it hung about her shoulders. She closed her eyes whenever he touched her, lost in an experience that was wholly new to her, instinctively shutting out the rest of the world that she might concentrate upon her own exalted state of being. She felt intensively alive all over and yet wholly unresistant.

At last they unavoidably came to the door of Mrs. Schermer's boarding house. It was dark and still, as was most of the town, for it was near midnight and nothing was open at that hour except the saloons. They sat in the buggy while Mary fixed her hair as best she could without a glass, while Riley fished around on the floor for lost hair pins and both of them laughed very softly.

He went with her to the door and there they both stopped. It was a crucial moment. Mary looked up at him, hesitating. She thought of a line she had heard somewhere. "She who hesitates is lost." She didn't quote the line but she covered a little giggle with one hand. Then she whispered: "Come in. But don't make any noise."

Obviously, now they were united in a criminal conspiracy. Riley opened and closed the door with a firm and powerful hand, making no more noise than a skilled burglar. In the hallway a wide pale beam of moonlight pointed to a huge haircloth sofa, worn shiny all over, slightly ruptured in a few places. It seemed to be lying in wait for them. They tiptoed to it, hand in hand. A loose floor board creaked under Riley's mighty tread and to Mary it sounded like a shriek of outraged propriety.

As she sank into his arms on the sofa she could hear his breathing and she could feel the tremor in his hands. For the first time his mountainous calm was broken, he was just as excited as she. The fact gave her a delicious feeling of power, and also of impending crisis. She didn't care. She didn't care what happened. Yes, she did!

She was aware of him lifting her, laying her down, of his tremulous hands all over her, it seemed, of his breathing in her ear and on her cheek. She closed her eyes, went limp in a moment of complete and expectant abandon, awaiting her fate.

She waited what seemed a long time. In her innocence she had expected something as sudden and decisive as a lightning bolt, but it simply didn't happen. She opened her eyes at last, lifted her head and looked. In the pale light their eyes met. For a long moment she stared into his face, amazed. He

didn't look like the Riley she had known, so competent, masterful, and sure of himself. He looked now incredibly young and a little foolish, with his hair rumpled, his mouth half open in a bewildered grin, his eyes all eagerness and confusion. He looked like a little boy caught trying to steal candy and not quite able to reach it. . . . Suddenly she understood. Tremulous and excited, with little light upon a difficult subject, Riley was completely lost in a wilderness of petticoat, corset, and pantie. The kind of clothes that Mary wore were an almost impregnable fortress of virtue.

Disastrously, it struck her as funny. In spite of herself she began to laugh. Inward laughter first convulsed her whole body, then broke irresistibly from her lips in a peal that shattered the silence like a fire whistle. The expression of alarm and amazement on Riley's face only made her laugh the more. She sat up, fumbling at her rumpled hair, smoothing her ravished dress, but laughing still, while Riley stared at her in helpless consternation.

Such an unwonted noise at such a time of night could not fail to attract attention. They heard doors open and footsteps on the second floor. They saw the faint beam of a candle approaching the head of the stairs. Bravely, choking down her laughter, Mary rose to meet emergency.

Mrs. Schermer came part way down the stairs, clad in a quilted wrapper, her hair hanging in braids, the flame of a candle making her grave lean face look grim.

"Oh, Mrs. Schermer!" Mary cried gaily. "Congratulate me! Mr. Riley has just asked me to marry him!"

For a moment Mrs. Schermer stood looking from one to other of them in a silence that was heavy with suspicion. Mary stood high-headed, self-possessed, radiant. Riley looked as though he had been caught trying to steal a chicken or a watermelon. It was her turn for once to play the adequate, the decisive part. Mrs. Schermer spoke finally.

"I don't see anything so funny about that," she said.

Mary laughed again. Mrs. Schermer at last relaxed into a smile, came down and offered a lean hard hand. Riley took it humbly, as though an angel had descended from Heaven to confer forgiveness, Mary lightly and easily. She was wholly the aristocrat now. She was both a Chase and a Morgan, proud and disdainful, superior to the absurdity of circumstance.

Mrs. Schermer retired and they stood looking at each other. Riley's face reflected an admiration almost worshipful. Mary felt powerful, elated, equal to anything. This moment was wholly hers.

"Did you . . . mean it?" Riley asked huskily.

"Of course," Mary said.

"Then may I call for you, say . . . tomorrow?"

"No! Now! she cried. "We're going now!"

She had not a trace of doubt or hesitation. She wanted to seize this moment of passion and assurance, to fulfill it, to exploit it for all it was worth.

Now that action was in order, Riley recovered his balance with ease. He became the leader again. Laughing as though the whole thing were a prank, they went and routed out an astounded official who was a friend of Riley's, the city hall was unlocked that their nuptials might be licensed, and a justice of the peace was roused from slumber to make them one, while Ed Fowler was an astonished witness to the proceedings. Afterwards, all five of them had a very late supper and the bride's health was drunk in champagne. Riley bought tickets for the morning train north. About three o'clock in the morning they registered at the Savoy Hotel.

Mary's excitement carried her through without a break until the moment when Riley left her alone and she stood looking at the wide expanse of a double bed which she was to share with a man. Then, suddenly, fear overcame her. Fearful but resolute she undressed and fearfully she crept between sheets that seemed as cold as ice, buried her head in the pillow and cowered, waiting. It seemed as though the frenzy of abandon she had discovered for the first time that night, had so cherished and longed to use, all had deserted her now. What was about to happen seemed preposterous, impossible.

It was then that Riley most completely won her gratitude. His greatest power and dignity lay in his kindness. It was the kindness of a simple man, not too sensitive, but with an almost physical awareness of the feeling in any living thing. It seemed to be more in his hands and voice than in his mind. He could soothe a frightened horse by the touch of his hand and his calm, slow voice had quieted more than one man who thought he was fighting mad.

His hands were gentle upon her now and his voice was gentle in her ear. He talked to her for a long time, until all the tension of fear had left her body, until she laughed softly at something he said. . . . Even the pain she felt seemed somehow right.

IV

They spent their honeymoon at the Brown Palace Hotel in Denver, the most splendid hostelry in the West. But when they turned homeward, Mary was sad. She had a feeling she could not shake off that the high point of her life had passed, that the future was dark and difficult. What she feared to face was the social problem created by her marriage, and she never did face it.

But Mary soon had an excuse for avoiding social duties in her pregnancy,

and after her baby was born she was not well for quite a while. It came to be understood that Jim Riley's wife was an invalid who went out very little and entertained not at all. Her illness was at first a pretense, but it became more and more a fact, for Mary never was wholly well again. Her last few years were not unhappy ones. The isolation she had dreaded at first, and then accepted with resignation, became at last a thing she prized. As a strange serenity comes to sit upon the faces of the blind because one great source of irritation and excitement is cut off, as men who live in the wilderness or sail on ships come to love their freedom from the prickly tangle of social life, so Mary learned to cherish the peace that lay within the circle of her solitude.

She had long periods when she felt wholly unequal to living, and shorter ones when she was filled with energy and passion. Riley was supremely aware of these and delighted in them. She had always a dress of a certain shade of green that she wore in the evenings when she wanted especially to solicit his eyes and hands. It matched her eyes and set off her dark red hair. For both of them it was the color and uniform of their desire.

She wore it the night she died. A great and feverish excitement filled her that evening. She felt more alive than ever, but she could see in Riley's eyes a trace of alarm, tempering his pleasure. With that almost painful sympathy which often grows between two who are much alone together, he often seemed to know her condition better than she did. He tried to quiet her. She laughed at him, then coughed and found blood on her fingers when she touched them to her lips. At first she was terrified, but while Riley was gone for a doctor she recovered her courage. This, after all, was a moment she had accepted long ago.

When he came back and stood beside her, looking stricken and blankly helpless, she wanted to speak to him and couldn't because she was drowning in her own blood — wanted to touch him and was too weak. She wanted to tell him for the last time that she was grateful. She felt that he had given her all the life she had ever known. . . . But she could only hold him in her eyes until his face was lost in the swirl and darkness of a vanishing world.



THE LIBRARY

Something of Rudyard Kipling

BY JOHN W. THOMASON, JR.

SOMETHING OF MYSELF, by Rudyard Kipling. \$2.50.

Doubleday, Doran.

I REMEMBER the very shape and appearance of the books in which I discovered him: they were small black-and-green volumes, cloth-bound, and a poor printing job altogether, probably of the pirated lot he excoriates. Their titles were: *Soldiers Three* and *Under The Deodars*. I didn't know if a Deodar was animal, vegetable, or mineral, but I knew all about soldiers, from certain Confederate relatives of mine: and Mulvaney and his mates led me to Georgie-Porgie, the Infant, Love o' Women, and The Man Who Would Be King, and a whole community of sahibs and their ladies, performing interesting and unusual evolutions in an interesting and unusual land. Those days, they had me reading Tennyson and Wordsworth and Browning, for my improvement, and Ella Wheeler Wilcox was in circulation. But I found *Barrack Room Ballads* in limp leather, and

Departmental Ditties in gift-book format: after the high-flown imagery of the *Idylls of the King*, and the barbered ecstasies of *Intimations of Immortality*, and Mr. Browning's obscure magnificence, Kipling's verse cleared my tongue like radishes after heavy foods. Presently our invaluable and now lamented McClure's published *Captains Courageous*, *Stalky & Co.*, and *Kim*; and in my first year at boarding school, a romantic friend and I — (where is that fellow now? I never hear from him) — sat late into forbidden hours, mouthing *The Ladies*, *The Rhyme of True Thomas*, the *Ballad of East and West*, *The Mary Gloster* and *Mary, Pity Women*. Somewhat later came the *Puck of Pook's Hill* series, which I thought, and still think, as convincing reconstructions of the past as anybody ever made. By that time, there was a set of Kipling running across an entire shelf of

my father's library, and I was growing up. The War years were upon us, and the Kipling stories were infrequent and quite different. I did not find, in the occasional fastidious and introspective narratives he issued, the surge and sweep and gusto I remembered. For something had happened, and was continuing to happen, not so much to Kipling as to the whole world.

The excessively brilliant young journalist who emerged from the editorial rooms of the Allahabad *Pioneer* held the gorgeous East in fee, and had the bugle of imperialism in his throat. He spoke with the proper voice of the high old days that were most rampant in the last decades of the Nineteenth Century. The eyes with which he observed were the wise and kindly eyes of the sahib, the dominant overlord, meting justice and firm directives to the lesser breeds: fair was his lot and goodly was his heritage. His was the England of Victoria the Good, when the White Man carried his burden with the grace and *élan* of the chap on the flying trapeze, however badly the aforesaid lesser breeds might feel about it. Up and down the earth on sentry-go marched the Soldiers Three, lovable mercenaries with hearts of gold, led by subalterns of incredible efficiency and wisdom,

keeping watch and ward over the Pax Britannica, to the admiration and wonder of the age. The civilians and the subject races followed the same general pattern, and had of him their deserts in the way of praise or blame: Mr. Kipling discerned beauty and pity and terror in their lives, and wrote it all superbly. But, from his charmed circle, he wrote down always. The soldiers were the jolly true-fibered yeomen who swore terribly in the storied wars of old, and the officers were the same youthful esquires Froissart knew, clean-bred and barely literate, the most modern of them no later than Napier: all the characters were folk cunningly selected and most adroitly presented, and I doubt if any of them ever really existed, anywhere on this earth. At least, it has been noted that there were none of them in the British Army before Mr. Kipling began to write. Afterwards, the Tommies and their masters began divertingly to talk, and drink, and act in the pattern of the vastly superior Kipling models.

However that may be, the fine imperialistic world passed, and passed forever, with the Boer War. On the turn of the century, a loose association of pot-shooting Boer farmers showed the British Army things about war they never

learned from Froissart, or even Napier; and what they did to Kipling was probably more drastic. Nor were the revelations confined to military circles.

How clearly Kipling realized imminent and sweeping change, or if he realized it at all, we cannot say. We only know that he scolded angrily for a while, in crackling verse and pungent, singing prose, and then withdrew into himself. To all practical purpose, he died, say, about 1903. He retired, in fact, into Old England, where the legions held the far frontiers firm against the incursions of the outer barbarians, and Drake swept the seas, and the citizenry sat tranquil in the places to which it had pleased God to call them, and things were in order. Parnesius, that fourth-century centurion of the XXXth, the Ulpia Victrix, is most perfectly a company commander out of a good old County regiment that sports Peninsula War names on its battle flag. . . . Then came Armageddon with a besom of iron and fire, and swept the last of Kipling's imaginings into Limbo.

He was hardly of middle age, and he had nothing left to say. His restless, energetic mind continued to fulminate, but he wrote in bitterness, and his output contained no visible feeling for the new order of

things. His *History of the Irish Guards in the Great War* — a personal memorial, I believe, to his son who did not emerge from one of those battles in the West — fails to touch, anywhere, the actual combat soldier of the World War. It sets forth with his invariable skill the chronology and the battle honors of a valiant Corps, but the idiom is of the Sudan and the Northwest Frontier — not of the Europe of 1914-1918. No more than Julian the Apostate could he revive the ancient faiths or reassemble the old reverent devotees. He had, one is forced to conclude, neither part nor lot in the Twentieth Century. The peoples he sang, and the Empire he praised, were as dead as Troy and the spearmen of Troy. Yet to the end of his life he kept on writing, with a mastery of his medium that will compel admiration as long as men read books, and when he died there was a universal sense of loss.

Now comes his last book, *Something of Myself*. The publisher's restrained and dignified announcement on the dust cover says, simply: that when Kipling was seventy, he sat down to write his autobiography: that he made no announcement of his purpose to the world: that the existence of the manuscript was unknown until after his death. Further, that the

publishers esteem the privilege of presenting it one of the greatest honors four decades in the publishing business have brought them. And so on, through several hundred noble words, about the Master, and this unique and revelatory valediction of his.

With respect, I submit that *Something of Myself* is not an autobiography. The title is so exact that Mr. Kipling, with his unfailing gift for the felicitous phrase, surely selected it in person. It is what Rudyard Kipling is willing for us to know about Rudyard Kipling, and very little more; that little sifted and calculated by a competent sifter and calculator. You understand, as you read the 248 pages of fairly large type, that the vigorous, opinionated gentleman talking to you would no more remove his wraps for his readers than he would take his morning tub in public.

Reading, you say to yourself, I have been this way before. For Mr. Kipling's father was in the Indian Civil Service, and the English send their small children home to evade the rigors of outland climate through those years in which an English child does not thrive. Kipling's parents deposited him in a small house at Southsea, hard by Portsmouth, where the wife of a

retired naval captain maintained an establishment for children in his situation. You recognize at once miserable young Punch, of *Baa, Baa, Black Sheep*, his misfortunes exactly set forth, even to the placard which proclaimed to the world his habitual untruthfulness; and the over-addiction to reading which almost blinded him. Here also is Dick Heldar, of *The Light That Failed*, wretched under small measured cruelties. And you recognize the genesis of the *Jungle Stories*, and something more important: for it was the habit of young Rudyard's keeper to confine him and inflict, by way of punishment, the reading of the Bible; and of all the reading Kipling did in his life, I think his Bible reading the most important. You feel it in his strong and vivid prose, and it is most evident in his verse. Moreover, from the Southsea shore, he could look daily at the British Navy, performing evolutions in Portsmouth water, and he was navy-minded all his life. He owed much to that painful captivity.

In the fullness of time, his memoir discloses, his parents rescued him and sent him to the fabulous school in Devon, called Westward Ho!, under the headmaster Cornell Price, whom he would presently establish as one of the

supermen of English literature. Wherefrom proceeded, quite naturally, the *Stalky* stories, which I read as they appeared in series, and which my fourth-form son reads now, to the probable annoyance of his masters at St. Alban's. As long as the astute publishers keep them in print, the *Stalky* stories will draw each generation in its season.

When he was sixteen years and nine months of age, looking, he mentions complacently, four or five years older, and wearing real whiskers, Kipling returned to the India of his infancy, and went to work on the one daily paper of the Punjab, being half its editorial staff. As Jacob served for seven years, he served six, and they were critical years. They set the lines for all his life thereafter. Surely no better training-school for the writer exists, than a daily newspaper. If the editor is discerning and ruthless, insisting on brevity, simplicity, and accuracy, your young man is fortunate beyond other aspirants. Such an editor Kipling must have had: and he had, moreover, unbridled curiosity about everything in his world, and the energy to go and seek his answers, and the — gall, let us say — to question everything he could not verify himself. This is the slowest chapter in the book, but it suggests with sure strokes the

essentials of the Indian background against which his first flights blazed, and he did no better writing than his stories of those days.

Obedient to his destiny, he went home in 1888, traveling by way of the Far East and the United States, and it is to this passage the tale belongs: how he offered *The Man Who Would Be King* to the San Francisco *Argonaut*, it being rejected: perhaps not considered by the editor in accord with the editorial policy of the journal. He does not mention the incident, nor does he appear to have made further search for an American market: the time was coming when the American publishers would sit on their hind-legs and beg of him. He settled himself to write in the London of the late 'Eighties and 'Nineties, when the great Victorian literati were at their apogee, and he was elected to the Athenaeum. He knew, and had profit of, the best of his contemporaries; but, he remarks, he never cultivated the society of writers very much.

His easy reminiscence flows along, its rhythm curiously unbroken by the notable omissions. Of his parents he writes simply and with affection, crediting their judgment and advice beyond others, and they stand out as individuals through the briefest of

descriptive passages. You cannot see his wife, although you are given to understand that their life together must have been very close and satisfying to them both. Anonymous also are his children, except you learn that they are Una and Dan, who sailed the *Golden Hind* in the Friendly Brook, acted Midsummer Night's Dream on Midsummer's Eve in the Faery Ring, and were by Puck made free of Old England. Important names crop out casually: Dr. Jameson, Cecil Rhodes, Lord Roberts, Mr. Stanley Baldwin, Theodore Roosevelt the Elder: of the last, Kipling concludes, from exciting personal contacts, "he was a much bigger man than his people understood, or, at that time, knew how to use, and that he and they might have been much better off had he been born twenty years later". There are acid comments on the United States: and on Americans, whom he never liked, although he married one. And always in a phrase, or a sentence, or an incident, you recognize this story or that poem, with the feeling of being allowed quick controlled glimpses behind the curtain. And you will hunt out *Actions and Reactions*, or *Rewards and Faeries*, or *Many Inventions*, or *Just-So Stories*, to verify your recollections.

As his record mounts into his years of achievement, the chronology fades. The Great War is mentioned only in casual asides. The fundamental sociological and political changes in the British Association of Commonwealths, all dating from this side of 1900, all enormously accelerated since 1918, receive no notice from him. Yet we have at length his interest in motor cars, and we are told in detail of the Kiplings' patient search for the perfect house, which they found at last in "Bateman's".

The final chapter deals with the mechanics of his trade. After an early misstep or two, he placed his work altogether through agents. He used such-and-such pen-holders, inks, and papers. He did his corrections and his elisions with Chinese ink and brushes; and the physical labor of writing was pleasant to him. I am sure that a great many writing-fellows will read *Something of Myself* with close attention, in the hope of finding there a fundamental disclosure of approach to the high rewards of letters. Thus, soldiers, in their staff cloisters, study the leavings of the Great Captains, to isolate and to rationalize the formulae for victory. But Commanders of the first rank do not bequeath formulae, nor does Rudyard Kipling.

From this book, and from all we know of Kipling, I deduce one thing only. You may assume the flair, the aptitude, for his special form of self-expression: and such a flair must exist, but of itself it is very little. The rest is work, applied with common sense. It is what Rudyard Kipling did and how he did it. Where he had to deal with the contemporary scene, he went and looked at what he wanted: he observed, and reflected upon, and drew, from the life. He took nothing second-hand if first-hand material was humanly available. Into his historical reconstructions went the most profound research: whether he wrote of the British Merchant Service, or of Hadrian's Wall, or of early Christian messes in the slums of Antioch, or of the quays where the Roman grain ships docked in the Old Port of Marseilles, he wrote with the sureness of knowledge, patiently and laboriously gathered and eval-

uated. He was a perfectionist, and within his limits he won very near to perfection.

He had his limits, and knew them. He was not capable of sustained narrative, and his plot sense was of the slightest. He writes wistfully of his desire to do a novel, an old three-decker; and sensibly he put it from him. He never indicated that he saw very far or very keenly beyond his interests of the moment, and he made no pretenses. He was never a realist: he was an incurable romantic, although he used the brutal tricks of realism to color his illusions and to point them up. Far earlier than most men, he reached his peak of artistry, and over a full generation he could only repeat the splendid outworn shibboleths, and he had nothing cogent to add while the times changed around him. But to his last word, he remained one of the great craftsmen that our time has seen.



THE OPEN FORUM

The Double Standard Is Not Popular

SIR: I cannot resist telling you that I hope the article "I Believe in the Double Standard", by A Wife, will not be taken seriously by anyone. The author, a novice who claims to settle the affairs of the universe after "nearly a decade of being a model wife", writes of her attitude toward marriage with a pseudo-sophisticated viewpoint, yet reveals in every line her innocence and immaturity. Since when is a woman of around thirty, with plenty of money, an authority on conduct in marriage?

I will make no quarrel with her statement that the male, being what he is, needs and would like to have more than one outlet for his affections if he could get away with it. But I do not think modern woman has to agree with him and condone it. It is better to conform to a few laws which are for the good of the most of us. After all, this is the United States. Let the wife not think entirely of her husband's present satisfaction but the future for them and their children. She has picked a lemon I'm afraid. What with "biweekly monotonous regularity" at home and two or three outside interests, I can only say "What a man!" The average man has something on his mind which would occupy his leisure to better advantage, to say nothing of not having time after a rushing day trying to get ahead in the world. How would a little interest in his children or some violent games go?

This little wife isn't fooling anyone. She is not happy, she has been cheated, and is whistling to keep up her courage. It will be better for her when this sex concentration is dwarfed by another interest.

ANOTHER WIFE

New York City

SIR: Damn it all, your incomparable magazine has, at last, published its first putrid article! My nausea is provoked by reading "I Believe in the Double Standard" in your April issue. A Wife didn't have the courage to pen the illogical and inconsistent trash under her own name. God knows I don't mind a little dirt . . . if it's funny; but when A Wife attempts to mask such nonsense under the dignified dress of philosophy (even a dash of philosophy!) it's time for another female to speak.

Anyway, I had enough of "my quota of what it takes" to get two husbands. The second — very much alive with fairly well-behaved spermatozoa — still clings to my apron strings. No matter. Let's get to the cause of my nausea. In the first place, A Wife's article is shot through with glaring inconsistency. To wit: "Presumably I had my quota of what it takes to *keep* a man. . . . Why, then, was my mate's emotional stability so often upset by some feather-brained female?" Has she *kept* her man since she admits he often "beds up" with other females? Now, I ask, just what is this philosopher (?) driving at? Again, she launches into answering those questions she presumed her nonsense would raise. "Am I not afraid my husband will bring home a venereal disease?" What sane woman could feel secure in a love feast with an errant "husband, lover de luxe" upon his return from the couch of any *one* of his "feather-brained females"? Are "feather-brained females" apt to think of "regular prophylaxis" at the right moment while in the arms of this amorous "lover de luxe" for whom other "feather-brained females" are waiting, vying? And since his "boister-

ous spermatozoa" keep him on the run with his "love-menu" so "spiced to pique the appetite" that he stops long enough in his lawful bed to "bring surprises and diversions" to his "chief concubine", is it not possible he may unwittingly forget the "regular prophylaxis" while A Wife has swooned from some extraordinarily new "surprise"?

Since her man "*needs variety in sex*" and "feather-brains" are not prone to think about much of anything, why doesn't this "Wife of wifely virtue" investigate this "intercourse art" business with some other son of Adam who might teach her a real knock-out which she could bring to her "king" and perhaps tie her "libertine" and his "boisterous spermatozoa" to her forever and ever and ever? I would suggest that she feed the brute a little saltpeter.

If any one can label this "I Believe in the Double Standard" article conducive to sane, sound, constructive life and living, or a guarantee of "tenderness, understanding, consideration, kindness, and never-failing attention", on the part of a man to his wife, then I'm a jaybird!

I have been proud of THE AMERICAN MERCURY, its constructive articles. For years I've been enlightened through its splendid material. Therefore I resent the presence of an article that rightly belongs in the waste paper basket or perhaps in *True Story* magazine.

I dare you to print this!

FRANCES DE LA WORR COT

Bismark, North Dakota

SIR: I come to the rescue of the average American family. It is a good thing our husbands don't take the article "I Believe in the Double Standard" seriously and try it. I am afraid that there are still too many of us women left who have plenty of backbone and grit and who would rather work and live alone, yes, and with their children, than be the head mistress of a long line of mistresses. What a nightmare!

"Can romance survive an unbroken

regime of soggy bath towels, bilious breakfast manners, double beds, and soiled baby clothes?" Heavens YES, and more often than not it thrives. Isn't that the real test of romance and love? Otherwise why not continue to "date"? Everyone puts his best foot forward on a date. Isn't the real test the unpainted and unshaven faces of morning?

As far as I can make out, the author is dealing almost entirely with cohabitation in marriage. Marriage means a lot more to my husband and me. If a man is going to go right on having his dates, then why not have him set his "Queen Bee" up in an apartment, call on her the two or three "normal" nights a week, and thus skip the soggy bath towels and wet baby clothes? There is a class that does just that and makes no feeble pretense to call it love. Of course, this doesn't legally assure the "Queen Bee" of her bread and butter, and marriage does. Just how many bread-and-butter marriages are happy ones?

I, for one, would not be particularly thrilled to sit home waiting for my husband and wondering just what he had picked up in the way of new technique. If I attempted to explain to my daughter the advantages of a Double Standard, I fear that she would quietly scrutinize me at every opportunity to try to see just what I lacked that other women had. Pleasant thought! I wouldn't care to live in a Harem even if I were Head Woman.

You may print my name with emphasis on the Mrs.; I'm proud of it.

MRS. W. STEELE McCLANAHAN
Lockport, New York

SIR: No doubt the women will squawk about that Double Standard article—but that is all the more proof of its fundamental truth. American women have been getting away with murder for so long that they are beginning to take their unnatural ascendancy over the male for granted. I believe that if every husband in America would take his wife out into the backyard at 9 A.M. tomorrow morning and give her a

sound beating, the atmosphere would be considerably clarified and the situation remarkably improved.

These harriads — also known as Nature's Noblewomen — who have set themselves up on pedestals built of tin cans from the delicatessen store need a good going-over. How the American male stands for their tyranny is more than I can understand. They snatch his pay envelope, take charge of his children, spend his money on junk, bulldoze him, nag him, and make his life a hell. Regarding them unequivocally, they are little better than prostitutes — though, considering their universal physical repulsiveness, grossly overpaid. And these gals are to tell a man whom he can sleep with? Not for me! I come from a country where a woman does what her man tells her to — and not *vice versa*.

More power to the Double Standard Wife. There is one American woman who shows signs of intelligence.

ANTONIO GAPELLI

New York City

SIR: In spite of the fact that we have no common meeting ground (I having been happily married for more than twenty-one years to that *rara avis*, a one-woman man) I reacted pretty favorably to the article in THE MERCURY "I Believe in the Double Standard", by A Wife — until I came to the following words: "My worldly husband brings surprises and diversions to our intimate hours — variations which vegetable Mr. Jones, who rarely spends an evening outside his arm-chair and plush slippers, has probably never suspected, much less learned", etc., to the end of the paragraph — I cannot bring myself even to type it. When I read these words I realized why this woman lost her man — she is utterly lacking in that delicate sensitivity which inspires chivalry and fidelity in a man. Any woman who could bring herself to think such degrading thoughts and put them down afterwards on paper is quite beyond my sympathy. I do not wonder that her husband

philandered. I really think he is to be admired for having stuck to her as well as he has.

MRS. WINONA M. GILLILAND

Indianapolis

SIR: You say you pride yourselves on the manner in which you expose hypocrisy. Yet you print a shameful article in the April issue which is nothing more than the most degenerate and spineless hypocrisy that exists today in this country. The article is entitled, "I Believe in the Double Standard" by someone who didn't care to sign her name. The Double Standard is a hangover from decadent Latin culture and the sooner its falsity is made clear to everyone, including "A Wife", the better for America. Has this woman ever stopped to think what this country would be like if all husbands and wives thought as she does? Things are bad enough as they are without making it all worse. Has she ever stopped to think about the damage her wrong ideas can do to the sanctity of the home, the only really indispensable institution in this country?

When a man marries a woman he gives himself to her body and soul. He does this because he loves her and it is the natural and normal way for him to feel. It is not true that man is so built that it is not normal for him to remain faithful to his wife physically as well as every other way. The fact that millions of men gladly and willingly devote themselves to one woman gives the lie to the statement that man is by nature a polygamist. Man is not that. If a man is not willing to be faithful to his wife and forsake absolutely all others then he has no right to get married.

I maintain that the author's marriage should never have taken place. She was mis-mated in the first place or her husband would not want to do what he does. Cheating is cheating, and can never be condoned. Also, if this woman had any self-respect she would not tolerate her husband's illegal contacts. If she had any sense she could see that she has already lost her husband and

that her home is already disrupted. What kind of people will her children be when they grow up? They would be sent to the penitentiary for contaminating the American people.

I pity this poor hypocrite of a woman. She is kidding herself that she is happy. All she is is a member of his harem and nothing more. She had better stop fooling herself that she is the head woman and that the other women are jealous of her. The truth is that the former sneer at her for having such little backbone as to let them get away with their criminal acts. This woman is wrong in everything she says. Certainly all marriages are not immoral. This marriage is, however. It will serve her right to have her husband bring home a venereal disease — which he most certainly will do if he hasn't already.

Your magazine can regain some of the decency it lost by printing this article by printing one which will soundly refute this poor deluded wretch of a wife. You will also do her a favor by showing her this letter.

Mrs. C. L. RIGGS

Fullerton, California

SIR: I'm all for the sentiments of *A Wife* in your April issue. If she ever loses that lucky husband, put me on the waiting list. I am forty-two years old, worth about \$15,000, not bad-looking, and have been hunting for a woman like this one for twenty-five years. But until I find her, I will remain, yours truly,

A BACHELOR

Chicago

SIR: In these troubled times, when people, especially young people, are groping for a successful course, the article published in the April *MERCURY* "I Believe in the Double Standard", by *A Wife*, calls for the extreme opposite viewpoint of another wife who is at least as broadminded. The author's arrangement is nothing new with women who, for love of home, children,

and husband, have accepted weakling husbands under similar circumstances. These women are pitied or admired according to the circumstances, but to laud her husband as the perfect model, would be a joke if it were not tragic. If she were not so bold as to assume that she has evolved a new Code of Ethics, Morals, and Human Behavior, I should feel genuinely sorry for her; but she wants no pity and so I shall pity only those females upon whom her husband would so ruthlessly tread. She speaks of her mate as no longer a mere husband but a human being. If he is as happy with his wife and home as she says, then he is a mongrel dog. I was under the impression that human beings were superior in that they are capable of reasoning.

After ten years of living with a sexual weakling, the author has acquired an erotic perspective of life and love, and being the good salesman that he is, her husband has sold her on that idea, and she, to hide her hurt, is trying to call a vice a virtue. When a normal man finds his wife and home to his liking, he does not turn to others. Perhaps this husband is not as contented as he leads his wife to believe. To preserve peace in his home and avoid complications, which most men hate, he may have conceived the idea of this Double Standard, and she believes it her own brainchild, a sign of broadmindedness.

A WIFE

New York City

SIR: It is astounding that *THE AMERICAN MERCURY* would print such erotic rationalizations as are contained in the article "I Believe in the Double Standard". Had the author entered into an agreement of such a nature at the time of her wedding, her ideas might be of value, but she admits that a chronic philanderer forced her to accept the Double Standard. To accept a situation instinctively abhorrent to her might be condoned for various reasons, which are understandable to all except to women of spirit and pride, but to smear this acceptance

over with glutinous sex psychology and try to pass it around as some daring new theory is nauseating. Any woman who would send her husband out to brothels that he might learn exciting love-secrets with which to thrill his wife, should be in a psychopathic ward.

That such a nymphomaniac should have deluded herself into thinking that her perverted ideas were worthy of print is not half as amazing as that she should have deluded you into thinking so too. If this is the type of truth that *THE MERCURY* is so daringly seeking, I might suggest a strong dose of Listerine for the wind.

HELEN NEAL

Boston

SIR: The latest issue of *THE MERCURY* justifies the effort it required to keep up my subscription during the lean years just past, or, perhaps one should say, passing. "A Wife", as well as the editor, deserves the most sincere congratulations. Being only "A Woman of Thirty" the author does not realize and consequently does not treat the plight of the so-called "tired business man" or the occupant of the "bald-headed row" who is groping toward rejuvenation. At the last he is ignorantly attempting to retain glandular activity which shall ward off senility by its consequent flow of hormones of appetite and digestion. His plight is more on the tragic side than is that of the husband treated in the article mentioned.

N. M. WAGNER

DeFuniak Springs, Florida

SIR: If the writer of the controversial article, "I Believe in the Double Standard" in your April issue had included two more questions in her listing, the weight of her conclusions might be worthier of print — unless it was, perchance, a male! However, is the scheme *economically fair*? Unless the income is ample enough to provide comfortable alimony for any queen of the seraglio who finds herself in last year's faded kimono, without a servant, and — more

tragic still — a broken string on her zither; unless she is able to support her own opinions, I say, the arrangement has unjust if not merely stupid results. Second, can it be practical if it is not *mutually desired*? For if the wife is *forced* to take for granted that her husband's playful spermatozoa cannot be plowed under without the unfortunate psychological aftermath of a thorn in the mind plus the eventual transmission of a thorn in the flesh, then the Double Standard is a myth and becomes a sordid secretive mess. Of course, it all depends upon the size of the thorn before the flesh, as flesh, rebels.

How one quick-witted woman salves a deep hurt with the thin ointment of justification is naturally interesting, though more readable perhaps, in a "confession" magazine than in *THE MERCURY*. That the facts given betray loyalty to a poor cause is very clear. Shucked of the husks, the author's kernel of thought is age-old, still new — "how can I get along under any circumstances with the mate of my choice?"

Worthy of an honest marriage is the idea that self-indulgence is not quite as vital as self-control and the latter is more admired in an intelligent society — or by those individuals who have learned that nature appears lavish only to fools.

JULIA ETTA WATON

Winnetka, Illinois

SIR: A Wife says, "I think that the double standard should be made mandatory in the marriage vows". She says, "I have no quarrel with a world that says 'Yes' to men and 'No' to women. My husband can go where he wants, with whom he wants, when he wants. I am not a slave owner, holding his body in bondage to impracticable vows. A wife doesn't object to the money he spends on the other women. She says that our physiological structure makes love for us primarily a medium for motherhood. I have no quarrel with the wife who makes these grants to her husband but I do have a quarrel with a woman
(Continued in back adv't section, p. xx)

THE CONTRIBUTORS

GEORGE ANTHEIL (*Don't Be a Composer*) is the well-known modern composer. He is at present writing scores in Hollywood. V. JAMES CHRASTA (*To One Dead These Years*) is a young Western farmer. LINCOLN COLCORD (*Captain Robert Belknap Goes West*), the son of a shipmaster, was born at sea off Cape Horn and spent his boyhood on his father's ship in the China trade. He has been a civil engineer, newspaper correspondent, and editor, and now writes verse and prose at his home on the Maine coast. WHITFIELD COOK (*Dear Mr. Flessheimer*), a young free-lance writer, lives at Old Lyme, Connecticut. ALAN DEVOE (*Any Sex Today?*) is a former book-seller who lives in upper New York State and writes essays and short stories. MARION DOYLE (*Of Mortal Memory*) has published verse in numerous magazines. HARVEY FERGUSON (*The Life of Riley*), an ex-newspaperman and editor, appears on the Spring publication list of *Houghton Mifflin* with his new novel, *The Life of Riley*. ABRAHAM GOOTNICK (*The Art of Body Snatching*) is a young M.D. of Brooklyn, New York. DON LAYNE (*Why Become a Citizen?*) lives in Washington, D. C., and is now engaged on a novel. DELLA T. LUTES (*Old-Fashioned Social Security*), a contributor to many magazines, was born on a farm in Southern Michigan. H. L. MENCKEN (*A Constitution for the New Deal*) is the former editor of *THE MERCURY*. HOWARD POWEL (*The Game Cock*) learned about game chickens from his father, who bred and fought his own birds for fifty years. FLETCHER PRATT (*The Battleship Comes Back*) lives in New York City and writes articles and books on a variety of subjects. DIXON WECTER (*Reading, 'Riting, and Revolution*) is an associate professor of English at the University of Colorado. MARYA ZATU-RENSKA (*Glass and Porcelain*), a Russian-born poet, is the author of a volume of lyrics, *Threshold and Hearth* (Macmillan).



Credentials

ONLY the rashest of mortals will risk the unknown. A tumble over Niagara in a barrel, for instance, or a stratosphere flight. Few of us are willing to rush in where angels fear to tread. We seek precedent for our every move — in the food we eat, in the clothes we wear, in the places we go.

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***††† *Symphony in F (No. 8), Beethoven*: (RCA-Victor, three 12-inch records, \$6.50) (Columbia, three 12-inch records, \$5). Two new versions of Beethoven's "little" (but tremendous) Eighth. Both performances are superior to the average heard in the concert hall, but Koussevitzky's job for Victor stresses virtuoso playing by the Boston Orchestra somewhat excessively. The quality of the reproduction, however, is superior to Weingartner's performance with the Vienna Philharmonic for Columbia, though the latter realizes more of the music's essential character.

***††† *Symphony in B minor (No. 6), Tchaikowsky*: (Victor, five 12-inch records, \$10). Victor completes its re-recording of the three big Tchaikowsky symphonies with a respectful performance of the Pathétique by Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Since the interpretation of Tchaikowsky is a matter on which no two listeners (let alone conductors) agree, let it merely be said that in this case the reproduction is The Thing, and altogether extraordinary.

***††† *Malaguena (Lecuona) and Dance of the Camorristi from I Gioielli della Madonna (Wolf-Ferrari)*: (Victor, one 10-inch record, \$1). Two engaging trifles, done with familiar deftness and taste by Arthur Fiedler with the Boston "Pops" Orchestra. As usual with this group, the recording is particularly good.

PIANO

***††† *Nocturnes, Mazurkas, Waltzes, etc. (Chopin)*: (Victor, four 12-inch records, \$8). A variety of Chopin *morceaux* played with that glow and fancy which are the property only of another generation's pianists. The exponent here is the remarkable

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****†† Sonata in E minor (opus 90), Beethoven:** (Columbia, two 12-inch records, \$3). One of the best of the later Beethoven sonatas, expertly played by Egon Petri. There is a slight excess of pedantry in Petri's nature for music so romantic, but his fine understanding and virtuosity are nevertheless admirable.

VOCAL

*****†† Where'er You Walk (from Semele) and Caro Amore (from Floridante) (Handel):** (Victor, one 12-inch record, \$2). Another of the elder statesmen of music, but not excelled in his specialties, John McCormack here crowns a recording career of thirty years' duration with exquisite performance of two Handel airs. His voice is threading out, to be sure, but his art is un-failing. The reproduction is excellent.

****†† Prize Song and Duet from Act II (Die Meistersinger, Wagner):** (Columbia, one 12-inch record, \$1.50). An excellent version of the famous air by George Thill, unfortunately in French, as is also the duet with Germaine Martinelli, an able soprano. If you can accept Wagner's work as *Les Maitres Chanteurs*, this is a desirable item. The orchestra is sufficiently large, and the reproduction is excellent.

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Uptown Downbeat and *In a Jam* (Brunswick, ten-inch, \$.75). The latest in Ellingtonia, performed by the Duke and his orchestra. They are well below the best of his output, but there is some ingenuity in the first of them, and both performances are capable.

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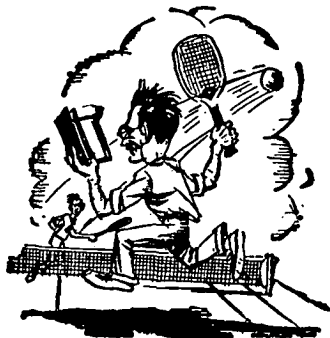
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THE OPEN FORUM

(Continued from page 255)

who says that I have not the same privileges if I desire to take advantage of them. Could you not grant your husband these privileges without taking away mine?

If women just don't have those sexual desires then why should we have a Double Standard? But if there is nothing that keeps a woman young like a love affair then I think she should by all means have many of them. If women are so sex-starved that they pour over obscene books for a thrill, then they need the treatment of variety in sex equally as much as men. If competition is needful in love affairs then why chain a woman at home by the Double Standard and allow her to give her husband no competition? If home to a man is only a place to "feed and breed" why should they keep up a home? The breeding could be done hither and thither and surely much of the eating would be done at the same places. In fact the wife might be dispensed with altogether as an unnecessary thing and all women could then go into the brothels to do the one thing A Wife thinks they are created for—to breed and satisfy the demands of men.

A WIFE

Annapolis, Maryland

SIR: I just tore up a letter of protest I had written relative to the article "I Believe in the Double Standard" in the April issue of your magazine, because a friend came in while my typewriter was screeching and said, "Must you waste truths? Pearls on swine!" And of course she was right. The morons we always have with us these days. Nevertheless, Mr. Editor, for the sake of the majority of readers, intelligent, propagandarepresenting folk, please recognize a limit to the offense privilege. Your contributor's advocacy of promiscuousness for a married man is quite too raw.

I. H. CALLOWAY

Orlando, Florida

SIR: The "Double Standard" article in the April edition of THE MERCURY intrigues me mightily, perhaps because of its similar-

THE OPEN FORUM

ity of cases. I, too, married a man many years ago and have suffered much and silently from my husband's peccadillos. Finally one by one each has disappeared — "gone with the wind", so to speak, leaving peace — then along came another that seemed to stick *ad infinitum*.

For many years I have been trying to hold our home together for the sake of the children. Although, like all other women, I would have preferred to run away, there were pride and family and a host of arguments against it. But having been threatened with having to go to work, poorhouse, and bastille because of my feelings against this pure girl, I have sat and taken all this abuse on the chin as gracefully as possible — all the while knowing this is just what he wanted as well as did the Jezebel of his choice.

After giving many years of my life to making a home, raising a family, keeping my husband from all sorts of foolishnesses and what have you, do you think it is easy to accept this Double Standard? Would any husband do the same for his wife, I ask you? And I answer my own question — No, emphatically No.

A. B. C.

Tulsa, Oklahoma

SIR: I used to know a girl who worked on the staff of *McClure's Magazine* and wrote fiction — readily salable — on the side. Her stuff was good. One evening she showed me the manuscript of an amazingly convincing story of a drunken woman, and asked me what I thought about it. This story of hers wasn't going to sell because — it is *too good* and the Editors say that people don't like to read about drunken women — it disgusts them." I already knew that this girl had never even tasted anything intoxicating and she said she had never seen but one drunken woman — just recently on the Sixth Ave. L. The story had come out of her imagination.

All of which leads me to wonder if the Wife Who Believes In The Double Standard in the April *MERCURY* ever had a husband or maybe just saw one once on the



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Sixth Ave. L., or something. What do you think?

SHIRLEY C. HALSE
Bedford, Pennsylvania

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

SIR: I have read Mr. Varney's article, "Class-War on the Campus", with great interest. I have been hoping that someone would be willing to discuss as clearly and frankly as he has the recent attempts to pervert the direct meaning of academic freedom. I believe that this article will be much appreciated by school men because it does clear up some of the confusion that has recently characterized our thinking about the future of our institutions.

ALEXANDER G. RUTHVEN
President

*University of Michigan,
Ann Arbor*

A LETTER TO MR. MENCKEN

SIR: If you were to decide that the lot of the poor — the inarticulate, the stupid — ought not to be as tough as it is, I wonder if you could write brilliantly on *THEIR* side. You certainly knock 'em on the nose for the status quo and fascism. Do you think the "smart boys" who get the best pickings have absolutely no responsibility for the dullards who cannot get by decently in a competitive society? Remember how you used to pan the Rotarians, Kiwanians and Morticians? Aren't they the "smart boys"? Do you approve of them now?

I may be a boob. At any rate, I used to read *THE AMERICAN MERCURY* in the pre-Depression days, and I agreed with its attitudes on religion, politics, and business. According to *Who's Who*, I am just about your age. In 1931 I was fired from my job by agents of one of the richest men in America. I was doing a kind of work that I had been doing for almost 30 years. It was a job that I could fill acceptably. I was let out with almost no notice. Under our system of "smart boys" and good pickings, I had

THE OPEN FORUM

absolutely no kick coming. What happened to me by reason of my loss of employment was nobody's concern but my own. I damn near died of worry for awhile. In my own esteem I sank pretty low — getting old, unable to hold the job I had, no chance of getting another job.

Then, oh, joyous day, I began to read about exploiting, capitalistic sons-of-bitches jumping out of windows in downtown office buildings, and I rejoiced exceedingly. "They can dish it out, but they can't take it!" was and is my thought and I gloat some joyous gloats. Then, I learned about Communism, and I knew that if I were living in Russia, I would have a job, or I would have had a job at that time; now I would be on a pension. Do you think that I and others who have gone through what I have, trying to buck the "smart boys", give a good goddamn about what kind of a dictatorship a Stalinist gang would set up in this "smart boy" infested land?

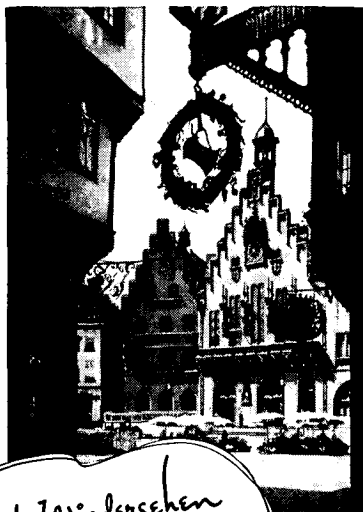
No good Communist prays, of course, but I spend fifteen minutes on my knees every night before a sickle crossed with a hammer as a penance for having voted twice for — Shade of the Great Lenin, forgive me! — Herbert Hoover! When the first parade goes down Broadway in Browder, Calif. (now Los Angeles) I'll be among the pike bearers, no farther back than the second row. I don't know whose head will adorn my pike, but I know a dozen or so I'd like to tote.

UNCLE JOE'S NEPHEW

Los Angeles

ORCHID DEPARTMENT

SIR: My subscription to THE MERCURY has expired and I am certainly glad that it has. Your pro-Fascist magazine does not appeal to me at all. Those Fascist articles by red-neck Dennis sure do disgust any honest and intelligent person, and those looney and silly diatribes by old jackass Mencken on the farm problem sure do nauseate a real farmer. You d — Jews ought to be for principles and not altogether for money and property for yourselves and helping the reactionaries. There is not a constructive ar



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ticle in your hypocritical magazine. You Jews ought to remember what Torquemada and his kind did to the Jews; besides you have a good chance to observe what has quite recently happened to the Jews in Germany, Italy, and Poland, and you ought to be ashamed to help your worst enemies do their dirty work.

G. E. NIEHOUSMYER

Genoa, Ohio

SIR: There is an old mathematical axiom that has, in effect, "The whole is no greater than its parts." Such, it seems, best describes the present-day AMERICAN MERCURY. When one issue carries as much reactionary tripe as does your March 1937 effort then one can only sigh in dismay, "Alas poor Yorick. . . !" How you ever managed to include such inanity as "I Believe in the Double Standard", by a Wife (?), Varney's "Class-War on the Campus", and Channing Pollock's "You Can't Be Unlucky", will ever remain a fascinating mystery to me.

In the field of literary criticism in which you seem better versed, your attempts are tolerable.

ROBERT L. BLOOM

Tyrone, Pennsylvania

SIR: I didn't like THE MERCURY ten years ago, and I don't like it now after sampling it again. It drips pure and complete negativity, poisonous sarcasm, and unrestrained iconoclasm. No wonder you have to flatter your public into subscribing. Keep on and you'll have to use a gun.

Quite the dumb stenographer,

JANET BELAIR

Holyoke, Massachusetts

SIR: Permit me to extend my meager congratulations to you for your courageous, minority magazine. In this hapless era, when most of our periodicals have fallen before the stampede of muddled, radical ideology, it was indeed a bracing experience to read the April issue of THE AMERICAN MERCURY. Gordon Carroll's article and your editorial are the first proper analyses of the sit-down strike, analyses which pellucidly demonstrate that the modern strike tech-

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L. FOSTER

Harvard University,
Cambridge

SIR: I have an idea Mr. Mencken who wrote "The Dole For Bogus Farmers" in December MERCURY, never had to speculate on his ability to accomplish any thing, according to his jarrogan of language against people who speculated in the future of what became the dust boal. One thing sure he don't know his onions about farming, and another thing the most of them that went out there knew more about farming then he knows about the subject he was writing on. He says all Pennsylvania dutch are farmers from their snout to their tail. Any one that has any sence knows differant. The Pennsylvania dutch are not all in their right mind, any more then any one else that goes insane, and wouldnt know a plow from a three legged stool. I know a number of Pennsylvania dutch that came into the dust boal, usually they are good farmers but when it failed to rain, and their soil blew away, their snouts became badly twisted and they lost their tail in the hot winds, and took what they could get from releiff just like any one else would do to keep from starving to death. It dont make any differance, whether one crop is put in, or a hundred differant kinds, if there's nothing raised you dont get anything. But of course a city dunce that has only know how to pull pickles out of a jar, thinks the glass container they came in fertil soil, for the development of any kind of product.

There was a time in the lower Mississippi valley, a large strech of land sank below the water. People made a laving on that land before, and I guess Mr. Mencken if he had of been there, would have went

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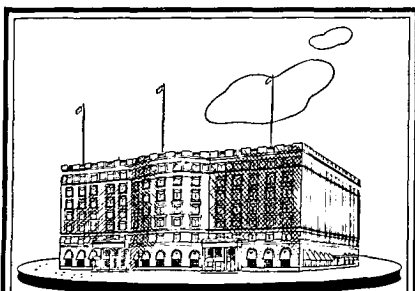
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TO

THE AMERICAN MERCURY

RIDGEFIELD

CONNECTICUT

AND

NOT to Our New York
Office

— THE EDITORS

THE OPEN FORUM

right on providing for him-self and family. Of course Mr. Mencken is a very unusual man, we cant all patern after Mr. Mencken, of course its alright for one person to be like that, but if a nation went like that, we would be better off to fold up our tents like Arabs and silently steel away. And by all means not leave our address behind.

There — you havent the guts to give me a square shot back at Mr. Mencken in your magazine.

EDGAR HALSTED

Bonnors Ferry, Idaho

~

THE DICTATOR MARCHES ON

SIR: Anyone capable of divorcing hope from reason must know that the easier economic conditions of the present moment cannot last; that these easier conditions are due principally to the insane dissipation of money from the public treasury and at cumulative peril to a budget woefully out of balance; that, in due course, every possible contrivance to raise money from the public will have been exhausted and so will the treasury; that, for instance, the real purpose of the social security legislation was not to secure wage-earners against diminished earnings in old age but for a time to protect the bureaucrats in Washington against a diminishing treasury balance. No one knows the truth in actual figures but the present number of unemployed, plus the number of the dole, plus the number added to the public payrolls, in the aggregate, is probably equal to the number out of work on March 4, 1933, when the country had its introduction to the More Abundant Life. That Dr. Roosevelt is fully aware of the facts, if not the actual figures, is certain. He has only to think of Hoover and his repeated promises of a prosperity that was just around the corner to realize that finally the country may catch up with the New Deal doctrine of spending to save. In normal times, the country would have caught up with the New Deal and Franklin Delano Roosevelt in not so long four years.

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THE OPEN FORUM

That he has any substantial popular support for any new panaceas today is only a bit short of miraculous. It is explainable only on the theory that he has fully mastered the technique of operating behind a screen and that fundamentally the American people admire the rascal who operates in a grand manner.

That the resources of the taxpayer are inexhaustible save for the Supreme Court; that there could be no empty treasury if to Dr. Roosevelt's present executive and legislative prerogatives, the judicial prerogative were added and he were permitted to write the decisions of the courts; that a recurrence of the 1929 debacle would be impossible if Congress would prolong its nap for a few more months while he takes over the judicial functions of government, is a fair statement of the issue and the arguments to support it. That Dr. Roosevelt is seriously worried about the prospects of an empty treasury, come 1940, and another collapse that will eclipse the Hoover day of doom appears highly probable. That he is actually concerned about the virility of Supreme Court justices of three score and ten, or a crowded docket that is non-existent, or the ravages of dust storms and floods, or their relation to the elasticity of the judicial trek on Pennsylvania Avenue is just about as probable as that he will abandon his deception.

In these troubled days, if one seeks a deadly parallel, "The Knight" of Aristophanes contains a passage that deserves consideration. The infamous tyrant Cleon, called the Paphlagonian, is thus described: "His eye is everywhere. And what a stride! He has one leg on Pylos, and the other in the Assembly; his rump is exactly over the land of the Chaonians, his hands are with the Aetolians and his mind with the Clopidians."

A little knowledge of Greek, of course, would add to an appreciation of these lines. But no Greek is necessary to describe our American Paphlagonian whose eyes see beyond the optician's chart additional letters for naming new agencies of personal power; who has one leg in Leningrad and the other in a drawing room of the DuRoi's

or on Vincent Astor's yacht; whose hands reach deep into the pockets of economic royalists while his heart lingers fondly with sit-down strikers; who has his mind on the Supreme Court and his rump poised exactly over the Congress of the United States.

Only because our form of government is different from that Mussolini found in Italy, Hitler in Germany, and Lenin in Russia did their processes towards dictatorship vary from the processes pursued by Dr. Roosevelt. Mussolini from time to time personally assumed new and additional functions of State and always with the sober declaration that some new crisis made it necessary. Hitler and Stalin are dictators only because in themselves they have consolidated every major function of government. Nothing of any importance has escaped. Napoleon's career is an exact parallel. First, he was one of three consuls, then sole consul, then consul for life, then dictator, then Emperor with the right of succession to his heirs.

That Dr. Roosevelt already controls the legislative department of government is indisputable. How he obtained his control is beside the point. His strategy is interesting as a sidelight but not otherwise. If the Supreme Court is handed over to him, the country is finished. The issue is that simple. Dr. Roosevelt will thereupon control the three departments of government and that is all there are.

Will history repeat itself?

JAMES L. MASON

Chicago



PUZZLED

SIR: As a constant reader, I am a trifle confused. In your March issue, "The Vanishing American Male" claimed that twin beds are sapping the vitality of the country. Now, in the April issue, "I Believe in the Double Standard" says that double beds are to be avoided. Will your next issue insist that one should sleep standing up? Please straighten me out on this as I am furnishing a home.

ROBERT F. FERGUSON

Zareville, Ohio

The Church Warns Her Priests

A Reply to Peter Whiffin

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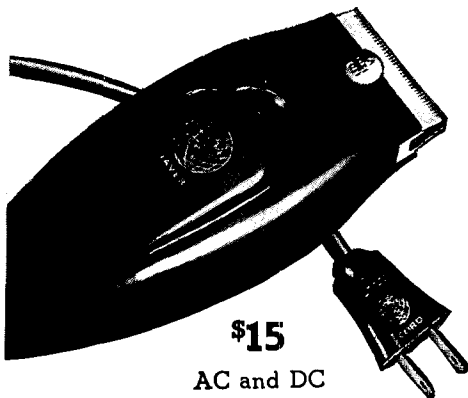
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